



## TERMS OF REFERENCE.

“To inquire into and report on the existing conditions of labour in industrial undertakings and plantations in British India, on the health, efficiency and standard of living of the workers, and on the relations between employers and employed, and to make recommendations.”

NOTE.—“Industrial undertaking” for the purpose of the Commission is interpreted as in Article I of the Washington Hours Convention, which is as follows:—

“For the purpose of this Convention, the term ‘industrial undertaking’ includes particularly:—

- “(a) Mines, quarries, and other works for the extraction of minerals from the earth.
- “(b) Industries in which articles are manufactured, altered, cleaned, repaired, ornamented, finished, adapted for sale, broken up or demolished, or in which materials are transformed; including shipbuilding and the generation, transformation and transmission of electricity or motive power of any kind.
- “(c) Construction, reconstruction, maintenance, repair, alteration, or demolition of any building, railway, tramway, harbour, dock, pier, canal, inland waterway, road, tunnel, bridge, viaduct, sewer, drain, well, telegraphic or telephonic installation, electrical undertaking, gaswork, waterwork or other work of construction, as well as the preparation for or laying the foundations of any such work or structure.
- “(d) Transport of passengers or goods by road, rail, sea, or inland waterway, including the handling of goods at docks, quays, wharves or warehouses, but excluding transport by hand.”

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The competent authority in each country shall define the line of division which separates industry from commerce and agriculture.

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## LIST OF SUBJECTS.

## I. Recruitment.

- (1) *Origin of Labour.*
  - (i) Extent of migration.
  - (ii) Causes of particular streams of migration.
  - (iii) Changes in recent years.
- (2) *Contact with villages.*
  - (i) Extent and frequency of return.
  - (ii) Extent of permanent labour force.
- (3) *Methods of recruitment.*
  - (i) Existing methods.
  - (ii) Possible improvement.
  - (iii) Public employment agencies.
    - (a) Desirability of establishing.
    - (b) Possibility of practical schemes.
- (4) *Extent and effects of disturbance of family life.*
- (5) *Recruitment of seamen.*
  - (i) Existing practice.
  - (ii) Effect of changes introduced in Calcutta.
  - (iii) Suggestions for improvement.
- (6) *Recruitment for Assam.*
  - (i) Need of retention of control.
  - (ii) Administration of present system.
  - (iii) Composition and working of Assam Labour Board.
  - (iv) Defects of existing Act and system.
  - (v) Possible substitutes.
- (7) *Unemployment.*
  - (i) Extent and character.
  - (ii) Extent to which caused by—
    - (a) Retrenchment or dismissals.
    - (b) Voluntary retirement.
    - (c) Other causes.
  - (iii) Possible methods of alleviating and remedying distress.
  - (iv) Unemployment Insurance.
  - (v) Application of International Conventions relating to unemployment.
- (8) *Labour "turnover."*\*
  - (i) Average duration of employment.
  - (ii) Extent of casual employment.
  - (iii) Absenteeism.
    - (a) Extent, character and causes.
    - (b) Seasonal or otherwise.
    - (c) Time and wages lost.
- (9) *Apprentices Act, 1850.*  
Value of.

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\* This word should be read as indicating generally the changes in composition of the labour staff of an undertaking.

## II. Staff Organisation.

- (10) *Details of organisation, administrative and departmental.*
- (11) *Selection of managing staff.*
- (12) *Recruitment and training of supervising staff, superior and subordinate.*
  - (i) Methods in force.
  - (ii) Facilities for training and promotion of workmen.
- (13) *Relations between staff and rank and file.*
  - (i) Relations generally.
  - (ii) Value and defects of system of employing jobbers.
  - (iii) Works Committees : their constitution, extent and achievements.
  - (iv) Works Councils and Industrial Councils.
- (14) *Timekeeping, piecework, contract and attendance registers.*
  - (i) How and by whom kept and checked.
  - (ii) How and by whom wages actually paid to workers.
- (15) *Contractors as intermediaries.*
  - (i) Extent and character of work given on contract.
  - (ii) Extent of sub-contracting.
  - (iii) Control exercised over working conditions.
  - (iv) Effects.

## III. Housing.

- (16) *Extent to which housing is provided.*
  - (i) By employers.
  - (ii) By Government or other public agency.
  - (iii) By private landlords.
  - (iv) By workers themselves.
- (17) *Facilities for acquisition of land for workers' houses.*
- (18) *Nature of accommodation provided in each class.*
  - (i) In relation to workers' demands.
  - (ii) In relation to best type from health point of view.
  - (iii) Provision made for lighting, conservancy and water supply.
- (19) *Utilisation by workers of accommodation available.*
- (20) *Rent-rates in various classes.*
- (21) *Special problems arising in connection with various classes of housing.*
  - e.g. Subletting ;
  - Occupation of employers' houses by tenants in other employ ;
  - Eviction.
- (22) *Moral effect on worker of industrial housing conditions. Improvements tried and suggested.*

## IV. Health.

- (23) *General health conditions of workers.*
  - (i) Figures of mortality.
  - (ii) Birth rate and infant mortality.
  - Methods of registration.

- (iii) Working conditions—
  - (a) at work places ;
  - (b) at home.
- (iv) Dietary.
- (v) Physique.
- (vi) Effects of disturbance of sex ratio in industrial cities.
- (vii) Relation between housing and mortality.
- (24) *Extent of medical facilities provided.*
  - (i) By employers.
  - (ii) By Government.
  - (iii) By other agencies.
  - (iv) Provision for women doctors, trained midwives or dais.
- (25) *Extent to which medical facilities are utilised.*
  - (i) Generally.
  - (ii) By women.
- (26) *Sanitary arrangements, (a) at work places, (b) at home.*
  - (i) Latrines.
  - (ii) Drinking water.
  - (iii) Bathing and washing.
- (27) *Extent and nature of official supervision.*
  - (i) Work of Boards of Health in special areas.
  - (ii) Inspection of plantations.
  - (iii) In mill and other industrial areas.
- (28) *Suitability of existing Factories and Mines Acts and Rules*
  - (i) Control of temperature in factories.
  - (ii) Control of humidification in cotton mills.
    - (a) Nature of action taken by Local Governments.
    - (b) Results.
- (29) *Disease.*
  - (i) Prevalence of industrial diseases.
  - (ii) Prevalence of cholera, malaria, hookworm and other tropical diseases.
- (30) *Sickness insurance.*
  - (i) Suitability of International Labour Convention.
  - (ii) Possibility of introducing other systems.
  - (iii) How to meet difficulties arising from non-acceptability of Western medicine, paucity of medical men, migration of labour, finance.
- (31) *Maternity benefits.*
  - (i) Extent and working of existing schemes (including allowances given before and after childbirth).
  - (ii) History of central and provincial Bills.
  - (iii) Possibility of legislation.

**V. Welfare (other than Health and Housing, but including Education).**

- (32) *Extent of welfare work.*
  - (i) By employers.
  - (ii) By other agencies.
- (33) *Employment of Welfare Officers and workers.*
- (34) *Nature of other Welfare activities, (a) by employers (b) by other agencies.*
  - (i) Provision for refreshments, shelters and crèches.
  - (ii) Provision for physical culture, recreation and amusements.
  - (iii) Other activities.
- (35) *Results achieved.*
- (36) *Provision of educational facilities by employers—*
  - (i) For adult workers.
  - (ii) For half-time workers.
  - (iii) For workers' children.
  - (iv) Extent to which used.
- (37) *Desirability and possibility of provision for old age and premature retirement.*
- (38) *Co-operation.*
- (39) *Possibility and desirability of a Statutory Miners' Welfare Fund.*

**VI. Education.**

- (40) *Facilities for general education in industrial areas.*
  - (i) Of children not in employment.
  - (ii) Of children employed in factories.
  - (iii) Of adults.
- (41) *Facilities for industrial and vocational training.*
- (42) *Effect of education on standard of living and industrial efficiency of workers.*

**VII. Safety.**

- (43) *Existing regulations in factories, mines, railways and docks.*
- (44) *Incidence of accidents in factories, mines, railways and docks.*
- (45) *Causes.*
- (46) *Accident prevention (including " Safety First " propaganda).*
- (47) *Accidents in non-regulated establishments.*
- (48) *First-aid and medical relief.*
- (49) *Stringency of inspection and enforcement of regulations.*
  - (i) In industry generally.
  - (ii) In seasonal industries.
- (50) *Effect upon safety of hours, health, light and working conditions generally.*

**VIII. Workmen's Compensation.**

- (51) *Workmen's Compensation Act.*
  - (i) Extent of use.
  - (ii) Comparison with extent of possible claims.

- (iii) Effects on industry.
- (iv) Availability and use of insurance facilities and value from workers' point of view.
- (v) Desirability of compulsory insurance by employers.
- (52) *Desirability of extending Act to other occupations.*  
Possibility of providing against insolvency of employers who might be so covered.
- (53) *Suitability of provisions relating to—*
  - (i) Scales of compensation.
  - (ii) Conditions governing grant of compensation.
  - (iii) Industrial diseases.
  - (iv) Machinery of administration.
  - (v) Other matters.
- (54) *Desirability of legislation on lines of Employers' Liability Act, 1880.*

## IX. Hours.

### A. Factories.

- (55) *Hours worked per week and per day.*
  - (i) Normal, i.e. as determined by custom or agreement.
  - (ii) Actual, i.e. including overtime.
  - (iii) Spreadover, i.e. relation between hours worked and hours during which worker is on call.
- (56) *Days worked per week.*
- (57) *Effect of 60 hours restriction—*
  - (i) On workers.
  - (ii) On industry.
- (58) *Effect of daily limit.*
- (59) *Possibility of reduction in maxima.*
- (60) *Intervals.*
  - (i) Existing practice—
    - (a) In relation to fatigue.
    - (b) In relation to workers' meal times.
  - (ii) Suitability of the law.
  - (iii) Suitability of hours during which factory is working.
  - (iv) Number of holidays given.
- (61) *Day of rest.*
  - (i) Existing practice.
  - (ii) Suitability of the law.
- (62) *Exempting provisions and the use made of them.*

### B. Mines.

- (63) *Hours worked per day and per week.*
  - (i) Normal, i.e. as determined by custom or agreement.
  - (ii) Actual, i.e. including overtime.
  - (iii) Spreadover, i.e. relation between hours worked and hours during which worker is on call.

- (64) *Days worked per week.*
- (65) *Effect of restriction of hours.*
  - (i) On workers.
  - (ii) On industry.
- (66) *Possibility of reducing maxima.*
- (67) *Suitability of the law relating to shifts.*
- (68) *Possibility of introducing an effective daily limitation.*
- (69) *Intervals.*
  - (i) In relation to fatigue.
  - (ii) In relation to workers' meal times.
  - (iii) Number of holidays given.
- (70) *Day of rest.*
- (71) *Adequacy of existing provisions.*
- (72) *Exempting provisions and use made of them.*

#### C. Railways.

- (73) *Hours worked per week and per day.*
  - (i) Normal, i.e. as determined by custom or agreement.
  - (ii) Actual, i.e. including overtime.
  - (iii) Spreadover, i.e. relation between hours worked and hours during which worker is on call.
- (74) *Days worked per week.*
- (75) *Extent of application of International Labour Conventions relating to—*
  - (i) Hours.
  - (ii) Rest days.
- (76) *Intervals.*
  - (i) In relation to fatigue.
  - (ii) In relation to workers' meal times.
  - (iii) Number of holidays given.
- (77) *Possibility of regulation.*

#### D. Other Establishments.

- (a) Plantations.
- (b) Docks.
- (c) Other industrial establishments.
- (78) *Hours worked per week and per day.*
  - (i) Normal, i.e. as determined by custom or agreement.
  - (ii) Actual, i.e. including overtime.
  - (iii) Spreadover, i.e. relation between hours worked and hours during which worker is on call.
- (79) *Days worked per week.*
- (80) *Desirability of regulation.*

**X. Special Questions relating to Women, Young Adults and Children.****A. Factories.**

- (81) *Effect of 1922 Act on employment.*
- (82) *Admission of infants to factories.*
- (83) *Suitability of regulations for women's work.*
- (84) *Suitability of regulations affecting children.*
  - (i) Hours and intervals.
  - (ii) Minimum and maximum ages.
- (85) *Double employment of children (i.e. in more than one establishment in same day).*
- (86) *Work and training of young adults.*  
Facilities for apprenticeship.
- (87) *Extent of "blind alley" employment (i.e. extent to which children are dismissed on reaching full age).*
- (88) *Comparative merits of double and single shift systems as affecting health of women, young adults and children.*
- (89) *Work of women and children in factories not subject to Act.*
  - (i) Use by local Governments of section 2 (3) (b).
  - (ii) Advisability of extended application.

**B. Mines.**

- (90) *Effect of Act of 1923.*  
Suitability of certification provisions.
- (91) *Exclusion of women.*
  - (i) Suitability of regulations.
  - (ii) Probable effect on industry.
  - (iii) Economic effect on workers.
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**C. Other Establishments.**

- (92) *Need for regulation.*

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- (93) *Hours of work.*
- (94) *Rations and accommodation, articles of agreement, &c.*
- (95) *Indian Merchant Shipping Act.*
  - (i) Existing provisions.
  - (ii) Need of revision.

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- (96) *Prevailing rates of wages (time and piece) and average earnings.*
  - (i) In industry.
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- (97) *Movements in recent years.*
- (i) Increases and decreases.
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  - (iv) Relation to profits.
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- (100) *Extent and effect of payment through contractors, sub-contractors or headmen.*
- (101) *Method of fixing wages.*
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  - (iv) Desirability of legislation.
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3	Mr. M. A. Khan ..	President and General Secretary, General Workers' Union, North-Western Railway.	} 397—427	14—32, K-121.
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5	Colonel C. S. M. C. Watson, D.S.O., O.B.E.	Chief Operating Superintendent, } North-Western Railway.	1—358	32—77, K-334.
6	Mr. A. K. Muirhead	Deputy Agent (Personnel).		
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7	Mr. T. G. Russell ..	Chief Commissioner, Railways, }	1—358	78—176, 739.
8	Mr. A. A. L. Parsons, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Financial Commissioner, Railways, }		
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10	Mr. H. A. M. Hannay	Member, Railway Board. }		
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15	Mr. E. C. H. Condon, V.D.	Engineer-in-Chief, Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway (Metre Gauge), Ajmer,		
16	Mr. C. G. Cotesworth, V.D.	Acting Locomotive Superintendent, Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway (Metre Gauge), Ajmer,		
17	Colonel H. F. Hobbs, D.S.O., M.C.	Staff Officer, Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway.		
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25	Mr. J. A. Jones ..	Chief Engineer,		
26	Mr. J. J. C. Paterson	Loco. and Carriage Superintendent,		
27	Dr. Scoresby Jackson	Chief Medical Officer,		
28	Mr. G. H. Kennedy.	Secretary to Agent,		
29	Mr. J. D. Antia ..	Auditor and Chair- man, Co-operative Credit Society,		
30	Colonel H. F. Hobbs	Staff Officer. ..		

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37	Mr. P. Wood ..	Acting Deputy Agent (Staff).		
38	Mr. C. G. Limpus	Deputy Transportation Superintendent,		
39	Mr. W. T. Griffiths ..	Divisional Traffic Manager,		
40	Mr. V. R. Kundunmal	Assistant Deputy Agent,	Great Indian Peninsula Railway.	
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98	Mr. Kanshi Nath } Muttu	President, Urban } Bank.		
99	Mr. W. V. R. Naidu	....		
100	Mr. P. Ramachandra } Rao	Representatives of the Bengal Nagpur } Railway, Indian Labour Union,	532—546	459—487,
101	Mr. Somayajulu ..	Khaigpur.		K-4013.
102	Mr. A. N. Bose ..			
103	Mr. H. S. Suhrawar- } dy	President, Muslim Welfare Committee, } Bengal Nagpur Railway, Khaigpur.	546—549	..
104	Mr. A. Gopal ..			
105	Mr. S. Joseph ..	Workers in the Golden Rock Work- } shops of the South Indian Railway } Company.	..	488—490,
106	Mr. Mutu Krishnan			K-4937.
107	Mr. S. Ramaswami			
108	Mr. F. B. Wathen ..	Agent, .. ..	..	
109	Mr. C. C. Fink ..	Chief Auditor and } Accountant,		
110	Mr. H. D. Sinclair	Chief Transportation } Superintendent and } Traffic Manager,	1—358	491—521,
111	Mr. R. D. Thompson	Chief Mechanical En- } gineer,		K-4943.
112	Mr. J. A. Cruick- } shank	Chief Medical Officer,		
113	Mr. G. Charlton ..	Deputy Agent, ..		
114	Mr. W. E. Marsh ..	Press Superintendent,		
115	Mr. N. Grayson ..	Architect. ..		

Serial No.	Name.	Designation and/or address of witness.	Part I (Written evidence) pages.	Part II (Oral evidence) pages and Nos. of the first questions of the series.
		CALCUTTA— <i>contd.</i>		
116	Mr. Syed Madhar ..	Representatives of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees' Union.	549—564	522—536, K-5292.
117	Mr. A. S. Fernandez			
118	Mr. S. M. Sundrachari			
119	Mr. K. Veerasami..			
120	Mr. Thoman ..			
121	Mr. G. Krishnamurti			
122	Mr. Lakshminarayana	The South Indian Railway.	1—358	537—560, K-5446.
123	Mr. P. R. K. Sarma.			
124	Mr. P. Rothera ..			
125	Mr. A. H. Smyth ..			
126	Mr. H. A. Reid ..			
127	Dr. C. E. R. Norman			
128	Mr. A. Srinivasa Iyer	Assistant Secretary to the Agent.		
129	Mr. P. Govindaraj ..			
130	Mr. T. V. K. Naidu			
131	Mr. S. Mohan Swarna	Representatives of the South Indian Railway Labour Union, Trichinopoly.	564—569 582—588	560—564, K-5736.
132	Mr. Mudalamuthu Mudaliar			
133	Mr. S. V. Aiyar ..	President, M. S. M. Railway Non-Workshop Employees' Union, Madras.	569—582	....



Serial No.	Name.	Designation and/or address of witness.	Part I (Written evidence) pages.	Part II (Oral evidence) pages and Nos. of the first questions of the series.
		CALCUTTA— <i>contd.</i>		
134	Mr. Ernest Kirk ..	} Representatives of the South Indian Railway Central Labour Union, Coimbatore.	588—590	565—571, K-5819.
135	Mr. A. Ekambaram			
136	Mr. P. S. Krishna-swamy Iyer			
137	Mr. A. Sundramurthy			
138	Mr. R. R. Birmamuthano			
139	Dr. R. V. N. Nayudu	Ex-President, South Indian Railway Employees' Central Association, Dhanushkodi.	590—601	....
140	Lieutenant-Colonel H. A. J. Gidney, M.L.A. I. M. S. (Retd.)	On behalf of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Railway Employees.	602—618	....
141	Mr. R. W. Suares ..	} of the Madras and Southern Maharashtra Railway. } Representatives of the Anglo-Indian Employees of the Madras and Southern Maharashtra Railway and the South Indian Railway.	618—634	571—578, K-5891.
142	Mr. Dias ..			
143	Mr. Thomman ..			
144	Mr. S. Hockins ..			
145	Mr. Freeman ..			
146	Mr. French ..			
147	Mr. S. Guuswami ..	Assistant Secretary, All-India Railway-men's Federation, Berhampore.	634—652	579—592, K-5995.

# Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on Labour in India

## (RAILWAYS)

### Fifth Meeting

LAHORE.

Friday, 25th October, 1929.

#### PRESENT :

The Right Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY, (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon'ble V. S. SRINIVASA  
SASTRI, P.C.

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt.,  
C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

Diwan CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S., (*Medical Assessor*).

Mr. HARKISHAN LAL, Bar.-at-Law.

Mr. W. TAYLOR, Director, East

India Carpet Company, Amritsar.

Dr. K. C. HITESHI.

Mr. M. A. GHANI, Bar.-at-Law.

Col. C. WALTON, D.S.O., Agent,  
North-Western Railway.

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E.

Pt. RAM AUTAR, Vice-President,  
North-Western Railway Union.

*Assistant Commissioners.*

Mrs. DAGMAR CURJEL WILSON.

Miss SIRAJ-UD-DIN.

*Lady Assessors.*

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

LIRCL

*Joint Secretaries.*

Messrs. LADIKRAM and SHIVRAM DAS RANDEV, representatives of the North-Western Railway Union.

K-1. *The Chairman* : Will you please tell us, Mr. Ladikram, how long you have been an official of this Union?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : Since 1924.

K-2. Have you yourself been in the service of the Railway Company?—Yes ; I was in the service up to 22nd January of this year ; I was a clerk in the Divisional Superintendent's Office at Karachi.

K-3. Are you now devoting your whole time to the Union?—Yes ; I am the Secretary, North-Western Railway Union, Karachi, and I am editing the " Railway Herald " which is the official organ of the Karachi Branch.

K-4. Mr. Das, will you tell us how long you have been an official of this Union?—(*Mr. Das*) : During the last four years ; I am now a member of the Central Council, which is the supreme body of the Union.

K-5. Have you yourself been in the service of the Railway Company?—I am still in service.

K-6. You say in your principal memorandum : " If administration can put some restraint upon the officers with respect to personal affairs, about 50 per cent. of grievances will be removed ". Then you tell us that the " service agreement bond " ought to be abolished. You then give us your views about the institution of the Labour Bureau. You say that the Labour Bureau " was really forced on the unwilling administration by the general wholesale strikes in India ", and you suggest that it is not likely to serve the purpose which you have in front of you. How long has the Labour Bureau been in operation?—Since last year.

K-7. Therefore you have had no long experience of its work?—The reason why we have referred to this point in our memorandum is this. Before the re-organization of the railway department, the system was being worked on a departmental basis. It was recognized by the administration that effective control was not exercised over various district officers as far as personnel was concerned. With the introduction of the Divisional Scheme, Personnel Officers have been appointed and put in charge of each Division. These officers do really what the Labour Bureau is doing now. As a matter of fact, these Personnel Officers have not much voice in any matter because the cases are decided on the recommendation of the executive officer ; these Personnel Officers might be treated as those who merely pass on the orders of the executive officers to the various employees concerned. This is exactly what the Labour Warden and the labour office is doing and there is no fundamental difference between the work that is done by the Labour Bureau and the Personnel Officers.

K-8. Do you agree that under the new system, the personal grievances have a better opportunity of being heard?—I do not think so.

K-9. But, as you say, the trial of this system has been only a short one?—Yes, but, as I said, there is no fundamental difference between this system and the present one except for the fact that in one case the Personnel Officers are gazetted officers of the rank of executive officers while in the other the Labour Warden is a subordinate. Do you think that a subordinate will not be influenced by the executive officer? When a

Personnel Officer himself has not much say in the matter, do you think that a subordinate will have any ? The only advantage is that the illiterate people who are afraid of approaching the officers to explain their grievances personally will go freely to a Labour Warden. The Labour Warden has not much powers, he is an employee of the railway and he cannot act independently ; moreover, these Labour Wardens are not technical men. For instance, if the foreman of a workshop sends out a man saying that he is not suitable, the Labour Warden not being a technical man himself cannot have any say in the matter.

K-10. I take it that your point is that the Labour Warden has not sufficient powers for himself to deal with grievances ?—That is so.

K-11. Can you tell us something about the service agreement under which there is no appeal against any unjust discharge ?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : Under the service agreement discharge and dismissal are not identical things. The workers who are dismissed, do not come under the service agreement ; they are dismissed for acts done by them, which the administration thinks they ought not to have done. In these cases there is room for appeal. But in the case of a person discharged under the service agreement, whatever may have been the consideration in the minds of the authorities, there is absolutely no ground of appeal and no room for argument. We have given instances in our supplementary memorandum where the officers who have been appealed to have given the simple reply that no appeal lies because the discharge has been ordered under the service agreement. Is it not a hard thing for workers to be discharged without being given an opportunity of appeal ?

K-12. You are referring, I take it, to discharges on the ground of retrenchment of staff, not of misbehaviour ?—Our contention is this. We do admit that the administration should have a free hand in dealing with their financial and economic problems which will sometimes make retrenchment necessary. But in the service agreement there is no provision that a worker should be dismissed only on grounds of retrenchment or other financial policy. Very often when an officer takes it into his head to get rid of an employee and when he finds that he has no apparent grounds for doing so, and that he cannot face the issues in an open enquiry into the conduct of the subordinate, he finds that there is a very strong implement in the service agreement under which he gives him a month's notice and discharges him. Against this order there is absolutely no appeal.

*The Chairman* : I understand your point. I think it will be convenient if I ask Dewan Chaman Lal to open the examination for the Commission.

K-13. *Diwan Chaman Lal* : In your memorandum you have referred to what is known as 'Debits'. Will you explain in detail what you mean by that ?—Yes. Suppose there is a case of pilferage. Then the officer concerned debits the man responsible either with the full cost of goods lost or their partial cost. Very often he is debited with the full cost. There are many factors that go to make pilferage possible. Take Keamari which is a big wheat exporting port in Karachi. One man is expected to deal with 10 or 15 wagons at a time. There are so many lots and the contractor puts three or four coolies on each lot. The coolies load and unload the wheat bags and in the end some of them say that a particular lot is short of two or three bags. The railway employee

has to rely on him. If the seal is intact on the wagon, the forwarding station master is at once debited with the full cost of the bags lost. Practically no enquiry is held as to who is responsible for the loss. We had recently a case where a shortage of two bags was discovered, while all the time the watchmen and the police were there. When they spoke to the merchant about it, he replied that there was no shortage ; and while he previously had signed for 200 bags, he afterwards signed for 202 bags. Secondly, there is transshipment at Hyderabad which is a big junction for meter gauge and broad gauge lines. Sometimes when the bags are bad, leakage occurs in loading and unloading. For such leakages for which the railway employee is not responsible, he is debited. There is no appeal against such orders and if anyone has the courage to appeal against such orders he is discharged under the service agreement. I personally know of several cases like that.

K-14. What is your constructive proposal with regard to this matter ?—I should say that wherever there is a shortage due to pilferage, the police should be asked to detect the crime and fix the responsibility on the right shoulders. Recently there was a case of the loss of a cash bag which was placed in the cash box in the presence of the guard and the station master and the box sealed. In this case, straight away, without any police enquiry the guard was debited with the full amount of the loss. We suggest that the police should make a proper investigation into the loss and challan the offender under the ordinary law of the land.

K-15. *The Chairman* : Have you put up this complaint to the railway administration in the form in which you are putting it before us this morning ?—We have done it many times. I have stated in my memorandum that I sent an elaborate note on this subject to the Divisional Superintendent, Karachi, and also to the Agent, North-Western Railway.

K-16. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Can you give us copies of the note you sent to the Agent ?—Yes. I sent an elaborate note of 10 to 15 pages giving concrete instances to the Divisional Superintendent. For eight months we had no reply. If the Secretary or the President of the Union writes to the authorities a demi-official note reminding them of the pending letter he usually gets a reply that as subordinates of the railway administration they should not write demi-official letters, but that they should write in the usual official manner befitting a subordinate.

K-17. What have you to say about frivolous debits ?—Under the railway rules, certain consignments are booked at owner's risk and certain others are booked at railway risk. Stamps are accordingly put on the consignments showing in what category the consignments are booked. If, owing to the pressure of work, which may happen to be the case even at small stations, the clerk forgets to put on the stamp, although he has booked the consignments in the proper way, he is debited with the difference in cost of booking at railway risk and at owner's risk. We had one instance where a consignment of *bhoosa* (wheat chaff) which was booked at owner's risk had no stamp put upon it showing that it was so booked. In this case the Station Master was debited with the difference in the cost of booking at railway risk and at owner's risk, which came to

about Rs. 100, notwithstanding the fact that it is well known to all concerned that *bhoosa* is never booked at railway risk. This is a case where the railway worker has been debited on frivolous grounds. When we quote these cases in our letters to the officers, we are told that these are individual cases and that they are not prepared to enquire into them; but how can we establish the injustice of the practice which prevails without quoting individual cases?

K-18. Have you any constructive alternative proposals to suggest with regard to the service agreement?—If sufficient safeguards are provided for the employee affected to put forward his case, it does not matter whether the service agreement is there or not. I quite admit that the railway administration, like any other employer of industrial labour, should possess power to reduce the strength of their staff if it is considered necessary in the interests of the concern. But my objection to the service agreement is that in practice it is used to victimize workers who make themselves obnoxious to the authorities by their trade union activities or other matters. It is impossible for employees to be in the good books of all the officers all the time, and every worker is afraid of victimization by one officer or the other at some time or other. The service agreement must be abolished and a system of open enquiry should be instituted wherein a worker will be allowed the privilege of calling in a counsel to assist him and cross-examine witnesses. I have known of a case in which a man was asked to submit his reply to a charge sheet, while the evidence on which the charges were framed was not revealed to him. He could not give a reply and finally he was discharged. Unless the service agreement system is abolished and a system of open enquiry is introduced the position of railway employees will not be secure and there will be no future for trade unions in India to the extent to which they exist in western countries.

K-19. When was the policy of reduction in staff in workshops adopted?—It was adopted in 1925 when there was a strike.

K-20. Was it in pursuance of the recommendations of the Incheape Committee?—The Raven Committee was appointed to go into the question.

K-21. That committee was appointed after the Incheape Committee investigated the question of the reduction of staff. Was any opportunity given to the workshop men to place their case before reduction was decided upon?—No, they never consult the employees before they decide upon reduction. It usually happens that at 4 o'clock in the evening the employee is told that his services will not be required from the next day.

K-22. Was it the case that not merely old hands, but also young men were sent out on account of retrenchment?—There was no definite policy at all in the matter of retrenchment. Whoever was thought to be troublesome to the employers was sent out.

K-23. Was any provision made for the people who were brought under retrenchment?—Practically no provision.

K-24. It did not matter if they starved?—No.

K-25. How many people, roughly, were brought under retrenchment ?  
 —At that time about 5,000 were brought under retrenchment, and then a few were taken on afterwards. That was a personal affair ; it was not based on any policy.

K-26. With regard to the Washington Convention, have you any constructive proposals to make ?—In my memorandum I have dealt with the Washington Convention. I would like to explain how it has been working in the railways. The employees who stand in immediate need of the application both of the Washington and Geneva Conventions are the running staff. What happens to these men is that the guards, drivers, firemen and shunters, are put on duty for 24 hours. It usually takes a train 16 hours to run from Lahore to Montgomery—a distance of 96 miles. But if the train loses its path on the chart it takes 24 hours or even more. When they arrive at their destination the running staff are booked as under-rest. If anyone refuses, he is transferred or punished in some other way. In one case when a man was under-rest and claimed rest, he was put on goods service. In making out a case for not booking guards under-rest, I quoted the instance of two guards who were booked under-rest, and I told them that in case there was any mishap the administration would have to bear the consequences. They replied to the Union that these guards had no grievance. They transferred these men to Quetta Division, which is a Frontier Division where the climate is most uncongenial, just to strike terror amongst them.

K-27. Am I correct in saying that if the Railway Board increased the staff, they could meet this difficulty ?—Yes : there is no other way of applying the International Convention—practically no other way. Here the staff are already overworked. It can never be applied unless they are prepared to increase the staff. I have stated in my memorandum that it would contribute to the health of the staff, and they will require less leave. Nowadays they have three Station Masters—one Station Master and two Assistant Station Masters. The Station Master is on duty in connection with the working of trains for 6 hours and for 6 hours on supervision, a total of 12 hours. 9 hours are worked by Assistant Station Masters per day, but at certain places they work 10 hours and the Station Master for 4 hours. If we act in accordance with the duty list which has been prepared by the administration, what happens is this. These duty hours can never be worked, because the Station Master is on duty for four hours in connection with the trains and the rest of the time on supervision : he has to look after the cash business and carry out general supervision. What happens is that a man who is on duty from 8 o'clock in the morning till 4 o'clock in the evening, and then goes off for eight hours and comes back again from midnight to 8 o'clock in the morning, gets practically no rest. Unless the staff is increased to give effect to the Convention, it will not be liked by the staff.

K-28. In your memorandum the case of one Ladikram is mentioned. Is that gentleman yourself ?—Yes. It is a copy of the Central Committee's report which I have appended.

K-29. You got a reply from the Divisional Superintendent to the effect that " Your services have been terminated in accordance with the terms of your agreement, against which there is no argument or appeal." ?  
 —Yes.

K-30. Are there any cases in the workshops at Sukkur or workshops here where men have been employed for 15, 20 and 25 years and yet they have not received any increment beyond the maximum of Rs. 2-8-0 a day that they get ?—I represented the case of *mistris* that they are mechanics and they must get an increase ; they have experience. We received a reply that there was a limited number of vacancies which could not be offered to them.

K-31. What is the result ?—There are no vacancies, and the men have to stay on that rate till they retire or die.

K-32. Does that apply also to the subordinate staff like the ticket collectors ?—Yes. I have appended a statement in regard to ticket collectors and others, in which I have given the cadre. There are 8 vacancies in the grade of Rs. 150—10—190 for ticket collectors. There may have been some change this year. There are 632 posts in the grade of Rs. 33—3—60, and 97 in the next higher grade. I have worked out that 84.6 per cent. of the men have practically no chance of going beyond Rs. 60, and they will have to retire on that pay.

K-33. Many of these people have been working for years ?—They have worked for the whole of their life ; they have to work till they attain the age of 55.

K-34. Does this system apply to the superior and the gazetted staff as well ?—No : they go on getting their increment.

K-35. You have detailed the case of an attempt made by you to get free conveyance for children at Karachi. What was the difficulty in getting the conveyance ?—There was no difficulty. In fact we have been representing the case for the last three years.

K-36. What was the case ?—I will explain it to you. In Karachi city there is a Railway colony, comprising about 100 superior staff quarters and 300 inferior staff quarters. They are hemmed in all round by railway lines ; and they have to cross the line if they have to go to the town. In the past there have been as many as 15 accidents, and we therefore made out a demand for an overbridge. Two children were run over while crossing the line on their way to school. There were many articles and editorials in the Sind papers, etc., who took up the affair. I also took up the matter and made out a case that there were about 90 children who were going to school and another 90 who were not going to school. The moment the Karachi Municipality applies the free Compulsory Education Act, I do not know what the position of the parents will be.

K-37. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : What was the difficulty in getting a conveyance ?—They did not supply it. They gave us a reply that conveyance is not meant for the class of children in question.

K-38. There is a good deal of racial discrimination ?—Yes, a good deal. The Anglo-Indian must have a superior type of quarter, even if he gets Rs. 40 per mensem. At Kotri Indians were forcibly ejected and suspended to make room for Anglo-Indians who were getting the same scale of pay as the Indians.

K-39. Are you in favour of the abolition of the racial discrimination which exists as between the Indian and the Anglo-Indian, both as regards



wages and housing ?—Certainly. In my letter to the Agent, which was forwarded by the President, I clearly pointed out this racial discrimination at Kotri.

K-40. Are there any cases in which an Aglo-Indian or a European employed on a Railway and doing the same type of work as an Indian, gets higher pay ; for instance a Station Master ?—(*Mr. Das*) : Yes, there are such cases of racial discrimination. For instance, sometimes we find that there are 2 Assistant Station Masters performing the same duties. The Anglo-Indian Assistant Station Master is in the grade of Rs. 250-10-300, while the Indian gets only about Rs. 100.

K-41. Is it true that this racial discrimination exists also in the matter of the education of children ?—Yes.

K-42. In your reply to the Chairman about the Labour Bureau, in regard to personal grievances, you suggested a method like this, that the Labour Bureau that has been set up should have some sort of fusion or liaison with the union or unions ?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : We desire that there should be no official hand in it. The labour movement should be independent, and the representatives of the employees should come in person before the officers and discuss the matters. They' should be independent men, otherwise there is a great fear of victimization. I do not want any sort of help from the officers in the formation of the union. They should be entirely separate organization, which should represent the grievances of the workers. There should be free conferences between the Agent and the representatives of the Union. In the past we have been receiving replies that the Agent sees no necessity to give interviews.

K-43. Are you in favour of extending the scope of the Workmen's Compensation Act ?—Yes.

K-44. Am I right in saying—and I want you to give me a careful answer—that there is generally a great deal of discontent both as regards wages and conditions of service on the North Western Railway ?—There is great discontent both as regards wages and conditions of service, but the discontent is greater as regards wages.

K-45. *The Chairman* : What is the membership of your Union as shown in your last return ?—In the return which was submitted to the Registrar on 1st April, 1929, it was shown as 5,000.

K-46. Has the number been increasing since or decreasing ?—It has been increasing rapidly.

K-47. What do you think is the membership to-day ?—It is about 10,000. I have a membership of 3,500 in the Karachi Division alone.

K-48. *Diwan Chaman Lal* : Since when has this increase taken place ?—Since May and June ; and in this month we have added another 700.

K-49. What do you put it down to ?—(*Mr. Das*) : It is due to a change of our policy. After Mr. Radha Kishan resigned, we took on as our President the Diwan Sahib (*Diwan Chaman Lal*). The men have great faith in him, and they are joining in large numbers daily.

K-50. Is it a fact that there was previous to this a good deal of suspicion in the minds of the workers when the Union was being run by railway employees ?—They could not courageously put forward the cases of the employees before the superior staff.

K-51. *The Chairman* : I have not seen the balance sheet. Did you send in a copy of your last two balance sheets ?—No, I am sorry we did not.

K-52. Will you let me have a copy please ?—Yes, we will do that.

K-53. *Mr. Gregory* : Is your membership continuous ?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : We have a continuous membership of 5,000. Membership is not seasonal, but we have difficulty in collecting subscriptions because the administration has laid down certain restrictions, and persons seen collecting subscriptions are victimized by the administration.

K-54. Are all the members railway employees ?—Yes ; the executive can nominate a few members, but otherwise they are all railway employees.

K-55. It has been suggested that men have been transferred to Quetta by way of punishment, but do not many transfers take place to Quetta ?—But it is not done on any principle. I have, for instance, a letter from the Guards at Rohri station who say that they have been transferred simply on that account. It is very freely stated at Rohri station that these men are transferred because they have joined the Union. When I make representations to the administration, they refuse to discuss the matter ; they do not even trouble to deny what I say ; they simply send a letter of two lines saying there is no injustice.

K-56. Since the Washington and Geneva Conventions were introduced, have the hours of work been increased on the railways ?—The number of hours has not increased in certain cases ; in certain other cases it has not yet been decided what shall be the number of hours. For instance, a Station Master may be doing 4 hours train working duty and 8 hours supervision ; how are you going to arrange for that man to work 8 hours a day or 56 hours a week ? I predict that that will give you great difficulty.

K-57. *Col. Walton* : As a general rule, does the Union hold quarterly meetings of the Central Delegates Committee ?—Yes, we do have quarterly meetings.

K-58. After these meetings had it not been the custom to ask for an interview with the Agent of the railway ?—Yes, we asked for interviews to discuss individual cases, but we never had any satisfaction from the administration, and we are not taking advantage of these meetings now. Sometimes the interviews are refused.

K-59. Then am I to understand that, generally speaking, when interviews have been asked for between the administration and a deputation from the Central Delegates Committee, they have been granted ?—We used to get interviews, but for the last two years the policy has been not to grant interviews ; and when they grant interviews, they cut down the number of items that can be discussed. For instance, if we put down 15 items, they say that the Agent is only prepared to discuss 3.

K-60. Is it not a fact that on one occasion over 50 points were put down for discussion, some of those points having already been discussed ?—No, the points were not discussed ; we merely put forward a point and the Agent, as chairman, said he would look into it. That is not discussion. We would then bring up that point again at the next meeting and receive no reply.

K-61. I think you have said that there is general discontent on the railway. Are you aware that when a vacancy occurs on the railway, we have very large numbers applying for the post ?—That is because there is so much unemployment ; it is not because there is no discontent ; it cannot be argued in that way.

K-62. *Mr. Ram Autar* : Do Indian railway employees take full advantage of the medical facilities provided by the railway authorities ?—(*Mr. Das*) : I do not think Indians benefit very much by those facilities. For instance, around Lahore there are two dispensaries. When a man is living, say, 2 miles from the dispensary, he cannot afford to hire a tonga to go to the dispensary.

K-63. Are you aware that there was a dispensary in the city some 10 or 15 years ago ?—Yes ; it has been abolished.

K-64. Why was it abolished ?—I do not know.

K-65. Have the railway union applied for a dispensary in this city ?—Yes, but it has not been granted, though there is need for it.

K-66. Are you aware of the fact that a man living 3 miles out of the city usually gets treatment from his own doctor. but in order to obtain a certificate has to come to the railway dispensary, which involves him in the expense of hiring a tonga ?—We generally find that people are treated by their own doctor.

K-67. Does the administration refuse to accept the certificates of private registered practitioners ?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : Yes ; they refuse not only the certificates of qualified private practitioners, but also the certificates of Government doctors.

K-68. Are there any midwives appointed to the Railway dispensary ?—(*Mr. Das*) : There are one or two, but they are only for Anglo-Indians and Europeans.

K-69. Indians get no assistance from them ?—I do not think so.

K-70. When a man who has served, say, 30 years, is declared medically unfit and is given notice, does the administration allow him the benefit of all leave due to him ?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : If there is any amount of leave due to such a man he is not allowed the advantage of that leave.

K-71. With regard to education, has the administration made any arrangements for Indian children in the hills ?—No.

K-72. Do you think if such arrangements were made they would be availed of ?—Certainly.

K-73. Do you think there is a necessity for making arrangements in the hills for the education of Indian children ?—There is a great necessity.

K-74. *Mr. Ghani* : Do I understand that your Union is mostly a Union of clerks ?—We have all sorts of members.

K-75. How many peons employed in the different railway offices are members of your Union ?—(*Mr. Das*) : All the peons are members of our Union.

K-76. Are the railway porters also members of your Union ?—Yes, mostly.

K-77. You have dealt with the question of the education of the workers on the Railway. Are you in favour of industrial night schools ?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : Yes.

K-78. Where would these industrial night schools be situated ?—They must be in the workshops. Night schools for academic education must be in the city.

K-79. Are you in favour of a school where both industrial and academic education is imparted, or are you in favour of academic schools separated from industrial schools ?—They should be separated.

K-80. Are you in favour of free industrial and academic education, or should there be any fees ?—The workers do not earn enough to be able to pay fees.

K-81. Are railway passes granted to the children of Indian workers on the railways ?—Yes.

K-82. *Dr. Hiteshi* : Is the housing problem one of the causes of discontent among the railway subordinate staff ?—That is one of the causes of discontent. The Railway has changed its policy with regard to the giving of free houses, and that means an automatic cut in the wages of nearly 10 per cent. There are no houses, or very few, provided free now.

K-83. Do you approve of the system introduced by the Punjab Government of making advances to the subordinate staff and getting them back by instalments in order to construct their houses on co-operative lines ?—I do not approve of it. Our workers are not in a position to pay instalments. I approve of the principle.

K-84. You have stated that for about a lakh of railway employees there are 66 dispensaries which have 230 beds. What constructive proposal would you like to make on the subject ?—That the number of dispensaries should be increased is a big financial problem, and I would suggest that the Railway make a grant to the civil dispensaries, which have plenty of beds and which can meet the needs of the railway employees.

K-85. You say that even Government doctors' certificates are not accepted by the railway authorities ?—Not only those, but in a small village or town there is a Sub-Assistant Surgeon directly under the Civil Surgeon, and his certificates are not accepted, though Government officers accept them.

K-86. *Mr. Taylor* : Are all the employees in the non-gazetted grade enlisted under the terms of the service bond agreement ?—Yes, except the daily rated staff.

K-87. *Mrs. Wilson* : Is it not a fact that your women have a very efficient health service in Karachi? From what you say in your memorandum on this subject it is not to be inferred that generally your women have no facilities?—They have no facilities from the railway authorities.

K-88. Would they avail themselves of them?—Yes.

K-89. Have you asked for a health visitor or midwife to be provided in isolated areas?—We have asked at various places for a health visitor or a midwife.

K-90. Has your request been refused?—Yes.

K-91. You suggest a carriage allowance for your children to go to schools at Karachi. Would it not be more efficient to have the schools in your area?—No, because there are different communities.

K-92. Are you sure that your people want to go and live in the hills in schools?—Many will take advantage of it.

K-93. *Mr. Joshi* : Your Union shows a membership of about 5,000. Do you think that under more favourable circumstances it would have shown a better improvement in its numbers?—Certainly.

K-94. Is the attitude of the railway authorities in any way responsible for the lack of progress of the Union?—Yes.

K-95. Will you explain how?—If anybody takes any interest in the Union he is victimized; he is transferred, and leave and other rules are strictly enforced on him. They do not give us any proper hearing, they do not want to receive any deputations, and if any grievance is represented to them in writing they usually reply that they are not prepared to discuss the question. After sending such a reply to the Union they sometimes redress the grievances and this creates an impression in the minds of the workers that the grievances were redressed not on account of any effort on the part of the Union but on account of the benevolence of the officer concerned.

K-96. Is there any positive obstruction from the employers?—There is great obstruction. Even the President made such a statement before the Railway Federation; his statement is embodied in a book which has been issued by the Chairman of the Railway Board. We have a copy of it.

K-97. As regards fines would you like that the fines fund should be managed by a joint committee of the railway and your Union?—(*Mr. Das*) : Our recommendation is that fines should be abolished.

K-98. But if there is to be fine, would you like that the fund should be managed as suggested by me?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : Of course, it would be much better to adopt your suggestion.

K-99. As regards housing, is it a fact that the houses given to Indian employees are inferior to those provided for the Anglo-Indian and European employees?—Yes.

K-100. If the same type of houses which are given to Europeans and Anglo-Indians are given to Indian employees of the same status, will they like to occupy them?—Yes. In Kotri some of them had occupied such quarters but they have since been turned out of them.

K-101. *Mr. Clow* : In your principal memorandum you say " We have several cases where the staff has been debited with amounts exceeding his monthly salary ". Have you got those cases here ?—I have a case here in which a Guard was debited to the extent of Rs. 569.

K-102. As a fine ?—As debit.

K-103. So this remark does not refer to fines then ?—No ; it refers to the debit.

K-104. You say : " We do not contend that every fine imposed is unjustifiable " and yet you recommend that the fines should be abolished altogether ?—Yes, because they are not imposed under any regulation or under restraint.

K-105. Surely that is an argument for regulating rather than abolishing them ?—We want its abolition because it is mostly collected from very low paid men.

K-106. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You said that the strike of 1925 was due to the retrenchment that was made in the staff belonging to the workshops, but from the memoranda that we have received both from the Railway Board and the North-Western Railway we find that the strike originated with the dismissal of a fitter in Rawalpindi shops ; we also find that they presented a demand for 50 per cent. increase in their wages ?—(*Mr. Das*) : It actually originated in the dismissal of that man, but workers were discontented before that.

K-107. Yes, but what was the cause of the strike ?—Of course, the direct cause was the dismissal of that man.

K-108. Were you a member of this Union at that time ?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : At that time I was in the Karachi Division. (*Mr. Das*) : As I said, people were generally dissatisfied and the dismissal of this man was only a spark to the combustible matter that was already there.

K-109. We read from the memorandum submitted by the North-Western Railway that your Union disapproved of the strike and that the workers struck against your wishes ?—Yes.

K-110. In your supplementary memorandum you quote the instance of an Assistant Time-Keeper who gets a pay of Rs. 60 per month, or Rs. 54-11-0 after deductions, and say that the cost of living for him and his family is Rs. 171-0-0. What would be a fair pay for that man if the cost of living is Rs. 171-0-0 ?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : It should be according to the progressive scale.

K-111. Your idea is that the rate of pay should be according to the size of the family of the workers ? Do you mean to suggest that when a man is single he should get one rate of pay, when he marries he should get another rate of pay, and so on ?—No. (*Mr. Das*) : There should be two grades at the most, one junior and one senior, and there should not be any restrictions or bars as we have at present.

K-112. Take the particular case to which I was referring. After how many years' service is he getting Rs. 54-11-0 ?—(*Mr. Ladikram*) : 18 years' service ; if there were a progressive scale he would have got at least Rs. 150.

K-113. Even then he would not be able to pay for the upkeep of his family. You also say that the man has four daughters and to get them married it would cost Rs. 8,000 in all. You have to add the interest on Rs. 8,000 to the normal expenses of the man and say that the man will be hopelessly in debt. Do you expect the railway to pay a salary that would cover his cost of living *plus* that of marrying four daughters at Rs. 2,000 each?—We certainly do not ask the railway to pay. We have merely quoted the instance because in that case we were able to get the actual figures.

K-114. *Mr. Ahmed* : Were you asked by the Registrar to give an explanation with regard to your balance sheet?—No. In the case of the general secretary he called for an explanation as to why his salary was not paid. We replied that he was dismissed by a resolution of the Council for having taken an unbecoming attitude towards the President of the Union. As a matter of fact he was only an honorary worker and was not paid anything for his work.

K-115. Was there any other trouble with regard to your balance sheet?—No.

K-116. You said something about the pilferage of goods on the railways. Did you approach the watch and ward department of the railway administration and make a complaint to them?—No ; we cannot approach them directly. It is for the officers to ask them to detect the crimes. It is only recently that the watch and ward branch has been opened.

K-117. Your grievances have been removed now?—Not necessarily.

K-118. Did you put forward your grievances before the local Railway Advisory Committee?—We know that there is one such committee in Lahore and another in Karachi. But it is very clearly laid down that the question of the grievances of the employees is not within their scope.

K-119. *Mr. Cliff* : Would you welcome facilities for preferring claims on behalf of the railway work-people and having them considered and discussed between the representatives of the unions and representatives of the railway administration?—Of course we would.

K-120. Would you welcome an opportunity similar to the one that you have here to-day, where on the one hand the railway unions prefer their case and on the other hand the railway administration prefer their case, and the Commission sits and hears the evidence on both sides?—Surely we would.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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**Mr. M. A. KHAN**, President and General Secretary, and **Mr. M. D. AKHTAR**, Financial Secretary, General Workers' Union, North-Western Railway.

K-121. *The Chairman* : I understand from the memorandum which you have given us that your Union in its present form came into being last year?—It came into existence in the year 1928.

K-122. You have a membership of 10,000 ?—To-day the membership is 10,575.

K-123. The grievances which you have submitted to us in your memorandum are in the main the same as we have already heard. There is the point of the service agreements, the point of deductions, the question of housing, the question of sanitary arrangements, medical facilities and workmens' compensation. I think I need only say that we have already studied your memorandum very carefully on all those matters, and we shall give proper consideration to all that you have submitted before we come to consider our Report. May I take it that your main grievance in principle is that your Union is not recognised by the railway authorities ?—Yes. It has not been recognized by the railway administration even though it is registered under the Trade Unions Act.

K-124. Do you suggest to the Commission that it will be possible for one set of employers to recognize two unions covering to some extent the same classes of workers, if those two unions are not acting in harmony together ? I ask you on a practical point ?—The railway, being a big employer of 2 lakhs of men, it is practically impossible at this juncture to expect one union for this railway ; but by evolution it may be quite possible for the two unions to federate within the next 10 or 20 years. At present, however, one body is not in a position to do all the work from Karachi to Peshawar and Delhi. Therefore, at present, facilities should be afforded for more than one Union to be recognized.

K-125. I rather understood from your memorandum that your claim was that you had a larger number of members than the other Union, and that the management ought to recognize you and not recognize the other Union ?—I made the suggestion only on the ground that if recognition is only to be granted to one union, the union which has the majority should be the one that is recognized.

K-126. But the members in your union and the other union fluctuate very rapidly ?—No. During the past two years the other Union's numbers have decreased while our numbers have increased.

K-127. We have been informed only this morning that their numbers have increased very rapidly from 5,000 to 10,000 ?—No. That statement is quite against the facts.

K-128. At any rate it shows that the membership is apt to vary rather rapidly ?—They submitted a report to the Registrar to the effect that they had more than 10,000 members, but in their balance sheet they themselves say they have 5,000 members. Naturally we take it that their membership has decreased, while our membership has increased from zero to 8,500 on the 31st March, and it is 10,575 to-day. I have brought here to-day the register of our membership, and all the forms filled in by the men, and also the particulars of payment made by the men. It is for the other Union to prove to this Commission that they have a register of members according to the rules laid down in the Trade Unions Act. I am doubtful if they have any list of that kind.

K-129. Do I understand clearly that your claim at present is that both the Unions should be recognized ?—I have no objection to recognition being granted to both Unions.



K-130. Is it a fact that to a large extent both Unions cover the same classes of employees ?—No. The fact is that the other Union represents the clerical and the superior subordinate staff only. Our Union mainly represents the labour on the railway, though we have a few of the clerical staff and a few of the European staff, but they hesitate to join because our Union is not recognized. Therefore the interests of the two Unions at present are quite different.

K-131. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Were you not the Secretary of the first Union that was formed in 1920 ?—I was the pioneer of the Railway Union on the North-Western Railway. I was the Secretary of that Union.

K-132. Do you remember the strike that took place in Saharanpur ?—I do remember : I have given a history of it.

K-133. Was Mr. Miller dismissed before or after this strike ?—He was dismissed when he was planning out the strike.

K-134. Did the strike take place and then he was dismissed for being absent from duty ?—That was the charge brought against him by the railway, but actually he did not admit that charge.

K-135. In 1925 there was another strike. What was the cause of that strike ?—Dismissal of the delegates of the Union at Rawalpindi.

K-136. And was your Union behind that strike ?—There was a Union behind the strike called the North-Western Railway Union, Mr. Miller's. and my Union.

K-137. Are you yourself a member of the Union ?—Yes.

K-138. Do you pay a subscription ?—I am an honorary member under the Trade Unions Act.

K-139. You are no longer an employee of the railway ?—Not now ; I was in their employ before 1920. I am in the trade now.

K-140. Is your colleague an employee of the railway ?—He is also a man of the trade. He was an employee of the railway before, but he is not now.

K-141. I see from your balance sheet the salaries are in arrears ?—Quite so.

K-142. And yet you have a membership of something like 10,000 ?—Yes.

K-143. Why are the salaries in arrears when your membership is about 9,000 ?—The first year of the Union cost us more to organize. We had to run down to Karachi and other places, deliver lectures and speeches : so it cost us a good deal to organize the Union.

K-144. Have you paid the arrears ?—We have paid the arrears and we have Rs. 5,000 in the Bank.

K-145. You have produced your balance sheet ?—Yes.

K-146. And you think that all Trade Unions coming up before us ought also to produce their balance sheets ?—It is essential under the

Trade Unions Act that all registered Unions should produce their balance sheet.

K-147. Do you not think that your workers in the workshops and on the line are receiving rather better wages or are having better conditions than those who are not employed on the railways?—They have neither better conditions nor better wages as compared with outsiders in many respects. A turner, for instance, may get Rs. 4 in a workshop outside.

K-148. I am speaking generally about railway workers. I do not want to go through it in detail?—If it were not for unemployment in the country, outsiders would be in a better position.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : I do not quite follow.

*The Chairman* : He means that the men on the railway get regular employment.

K-149. *Sir Alexander Murray* : The railway men, therefore, are better off than the people who are not on the railway?—I cannot say that they are better off, but they may be equally as well off in some cases, and in other cases they may be worse off.

K-150. In addition to their wages and houses, where they have any, certain of them have the benefit of a provident fund, and they also have gratuities and medical attendance. When you take all that into account, do you not agree that the conditions of employment on the railway are better than those prevailing outside the railway?—I should like you to compare the conditions on the railway with those prevailing in Government service with its pensions, gratuities and bonuses.

K-151. You are comparing the railwaymen with Government servants. I would like you to compare them with the people from whom they are drawn. The bulk of your workers on the railway are drawn from the agricultural classes who do not compete generally with Government servants ; they compete with agricultural labourers and with labourers of the same type?—The agriculturist can only work as a coolie on the railway.

K-152. They are also drawn from the agricultural classes?—No, not unless they have some skill ; they get their training in the bazaar or on the railways.

K-153. Where do they come from?—They come from the Punjab ; they are of the carpenter class and other classes.

K-154. 90 per cent. of the people in the Punjab live on agriculture?—Yes ; there is industrial labour in the Punjab to the extent of about 2 lakhs, but it is not organized.

K-155. *Mr. Ahmed* : Your view is that you are entitled to have your union recognized, because it is a registered union?—That is what we expect this Commission to decide for the present as well as the future.

K-156. You do not get free passes and other facilities from the railway company?—We do not, but the other Union does.

K-157. Why is that?—The Agent has accepted the view that when he recognizes a union he gives some facilities for the working of the union, and when he recognizes us he may give us some facilities as well.

K-158. *Mr. Cliff* : Have you made any written application to the railway administration for the recognition of your trade union?—Yes, we have put in about four applications, assuring the administration that we will give them honest and sincere co-operation if they will recognize us.

K-159. Will you give us a copy?—Yes, I will hand in copies of the applications which have been made to Government, as well as to the railway authorities.

K-160. What was the date of the first application?—The 25th April, 1928, when the union was registered; we sent the Agent the rule book and pointed out that the union had been registered, and should now be recognized.

K-161. What was the date of the next letter?—The 30th August, 1928.

K-162. Did you receive a reply?—No.

K-163. You have not received a reply at any time to that application?—No.

K-164. What was the cause of the strike in 1920?—The simple reason was that the prices of foodstuffs had risen by more than 150 per cent., while wages were the same as before the war. We then organized the men; the railways resented that and dismissed the delegates, and that was the immediate cause of the strike. We then handed in our demands and the strike was settled favourably for the workers.

K-165. *The Chairman* : You presented your demands after you had struck?—By means of memorials and applications we had already presented those demands to the authorities.

K-166. But the strike was a lighting strike, without notice?—The strike was started by the dismissal of the delegates; they locked out the men first.

K-167. *Mr. Cliff* : Did you get an increase of wages at the end of 1917?—In 1918 the railway authorities of their own accord granted increases of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  to 10 per cent.; but that was not comparable with the increase in the cost of living.

K-168. It is recorded by the Railway Board in their memorandum that according to the data available the average rise in prices of 75 principal articles of consumption was 12 per cent. at the end of the first year of war, 25 per cent. at the end of the fourth year, and 88 per cent. in December, 1918. It is also recorded that at the end of 1917 an increase of wages was given which was 10 per cent. for those receiving less than Rs. 25?—Yes, the increase was given in 1918.

K-169. Was there a trade union in 1918?—No.

K-170. What was the actual date when the trade union was formed?—The actual date was January 1920; we started a trade union known as the North-Western Railway Association.

K-171. Was that just before or just after the strike?—Just before the strike.

K-172. *Sir Alexander Murray* : After the Saharanpur strike and before the general strike?—Yes.

K-173. *Mr. Cliff* : So that, before the first strike there was no trade union?—Before the 1919 strike there was no trade union.

K-174. The next strike occurred in April 1920 ?—Yes.

K-175. And there was a trade union ?—Yes, the North-Western Railway Association.

K-176. Would you welcome an opportunity of being able to sit round a table like this to deal with the claims which you have to prefer on behalf of the employees ?—I have generally had no opportunity of discussing these claims with the railway authorities since 1925. I should welcome an opportunity.

K-177. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : At the time of the general strike of 1920, Sir George Barnes came down here and had a discussion with you, Lala Lajpat Rai and Mr. Miller, but nothing came of that ?—No terms were settled. The only difficult question at that time was that of the recognition of the union. Sir George Barnes said : “ I agree to the other terms, but I cannot agree to the recognition of the union ”. The workers said they could not accept any terms without the recognition of the union.

K-178. Nothing came of that ?—No.

K-179. Do you remember after that, when a representation was made by me on your behalf to the Agent that he should receive a deputation on behalf of the union, that he refused to receive that deputation ?—I remember that.

K-180. Do you remember eventually that the Commissioner of Lahore offered to receive a deputation which I led ?—Yes.

K-181. So that the policy of the railway administration has been consistently not to have any dealings with the union ?—At times they have dealt with the union and at times they have refused.

K-182. Did that strike paralyse the railway system entirely ?—It did.

K-183. Is it a fact that the paralysis was such that ordinary travellers had to take a pass from the executive authorities to travel on the railway ?—It was just like martial law.

K-184. As a result of the success which you achieved, was recognition granted to you ?—Yes, it was granted in the settlement of the strike.

K-185. If the railway administration had recognized your union, I suppose the strike could easily have been ended ?—If they had only recognized us in the beginning when the Association was started, I think there would have been no strike.

K-186. Was the system of deducting subscriptions for the union from the wages adopted in the terms of settlement of that strike ?—Yes.

K-187. Would you prefer that system ?—Certainly.

K-188. You prefer it because of the difficulty of collecting subscriptions on a vast system like this ?—Yes.

K-189. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Could you do that for two unions as well as one ?—It can be done for the union's own members.

K-190. *The Chairman* : Would that be a compulsory levy on the employees ?—No, we get their authority ; the system is that the members have to give a written authority to the railway.

K-191. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : A question was put to you about the cost of living. Is it a fact that before the war the wages paid on the railways were really not commensurate with the exigencies of the cost of living ?—Even before the war they were not.

K-192. Is it a fact that now, owing to the failure of the crops during the last three years, the cost of living has risen considerably in the Punjab ?—Yes.

K-193. Is there any definite machinery available to the railway administration for reckoning the cost of living and collecting the necessary data and facts so that we could get a proper index of the minimum living wage ?—No.

K-194. It is more or less guess work ?—Yes. But we took it from the figures given by the Board of Economic Inquiry.

K-195. That also is more or less guess work ?—That may be so.

K-196. Mr. Miller, along with you, was one of the pioneers and leaders of this great movement. Do you remember that Mr. Miller was arrested at the time of the visit of the Prince of Wales to this country ?—Yes.

K-197. And he was tried ?—Yes, and sentenced.

K-198. The charge against him was that he was responsible for stone throwing and an unlawful assembly, and he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. Do you remember that the High Court Judge, immediately after having passed the sentence, wrote a letter to Mr. Miller's mother regretting his action ?—I have heard about that.

K-199. Is it not a fact that as a result of that letter a telegram was despatched to the Governor in Council by me detailing the terms of that letter and saying that the Judge himself had applied to Government for the release of Mr. Miller ?—I have heard about that.

K-200. But Mr. Miller was not released and he had to serve his full term of six months' imprisonment ?—Yes.

K-201. There is no arrangement on this railway for training unskilled workers ?—No, except taking in a few appointments ; they do not employ uneducated people as apprentices.

K-202. Did not the guards belonging to the A class communicate their grievances about three years ago to the Agent and ask for redress ?—They have long been agitating over this question that grades should be abolished and the time-scale brought into force.

K-203. It was a fact that the railway authorities were perfectly well aware of the grievances of the railway staff before they went on strike at Saharanpur in 1919. The trouble was that there was no machinery on behalf of the workers which could represent their case to the authorities ?—That is so. Before the strike, many memorials and petitions had been sent by different kinds of staff.

K-204. It has been stated in reply to Sir Alexander Murray that the recruits are taken from the agricultural classes. That is not correct ?—I do not think it is correct.

K-205. Because they have to do semi-skilled and skilled work ?—Yes.

K-206. I see from the Industrial Census figures that there are about 3 million dependants of industrial workers in the Punjab. It is obvious therefore that there is a large body of industrial workers from whom the recruits could be taken. I take it that there is great unemployment amongst them and that is the reason why so many applications are sent whenever there is a vacancy in the railways. The men are willing to take up any sort of service ?—Yes, for the sake of a little bread.

K-207. You do not agree with the policy of supply and demand as far as labour is concerned and that wages should be fixed from that point of view ?—My objection is that the question of supply and demand entirely rests with the Government policy ; Government is the buyer as well as the seller. If labour is a marketable commodity then of course the question of supply and demand will come in. We should regard labour as being human beings and give full consideration to it.

K-208. You think that the railway is in a position to give effect to the suggestions put forward by the workers in regard to the amelioration of their condition, pay, service, housing, education, etc. ?—I have already mentioned that the railway makes a huge profit. During the year 1927-28, as is shown in their report, about a crore and 2 lakhs was the net profit.

K-208a. Can you give me figures, if you are in a position to do so, showing what advantage was derived by the superior staff as a result of the recommendations of the Lee Commission ?—I think the emoluments of the superior staff have been increased by cent per cent.

K-208b. Is it a fact that the policy of the Government of India has been to recognise the union which is representative of the workers ? That is at least what they state in the Assembly ? You do claim that your union is representative of the workers and yet they have not recognised your union ?—That is so.

K-208c. *Colonel Russell* : With regard to the cost of living, will you supply the Commission with details as to the cost of a family budget of your lowest grade worker ?—I can send it later on.

K-209. There seems to be some dissatisfaction, if we are to believe your memorandum, as to the medical service that you get on the railway. What is the difficulty with regard to securing certificates ?—At present there is great difficulty. I will just quote one instance. Supposing a man is injured, he is entitled to compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act. But he is compelled to produce a certificate from the Railway Medical Officer. The Railway Medical Officer being an employee of the railway naturally has to take into consideration the requirements of the railway before he accedes to the request of the workman.

K-210. What change would you require in the system ?—Only a simple change is necessary—that a railway employee can produce a certificate from a licentiated *hakim* or *vaidya* which should be admitted by the railway authorities.

K-211. But unfortunately even the medical profession in certain cases is not above temptation and there might be difficulties in accepting certain certificates. How would you avoid the difficulties ? The certificate might be a false one ?—We cannot help it ; the same thing happens all over. My point is that the railway authorities should not insist on a certificate from the Railway Medical Officer and that the railway doctors should be used purely for medical attention.

K-212. *The Chairman* : You would like to have an independent panel with regard to the issue of certificates, I take it ?—Yes.

K-213. *Colonel Russell* : A suggestion has been made this morning that it might be possible to have a medical board or some kind of a committee representing both the medical officer granting the certificate and the railway medical staff to decide as to whether that certificate was a good one or not and whether the man had a fair case. Would you agree to a system of that kind ?—I should not ; I do not doubt the validity of a certificate granted by a licentiate doctor.

K-214. With regard to welfare work you say : “ Lady doctors, *dais* and mid-wives are very limited in number ” and you ask for an increase in their number. Would you admit that women of this Province would make use of a staff of this kind ?—They would gladly make use of the *dais*.

K-215. *Mr. Gregory* : You say in your memorandum that a partial strike took place in the Loco. Shops. Which partial strike do you refer to ?—It refers to the recent strike that took place in the Loco. Shops this year over the dismissal of our delegate Muhammad Hussain who was urging the employees not to accept the piece-work system.

K-216. Will you give the date of that strike ?—2nd August, 1929.

K-217. Before the strike took place did you advise the administration that you were intending to strike ?—That was not a strike at all ; it was only a protest which lasted for two hours. As a protest against the dismissal of Muhammad Hussain the workers stopped work ; I immediately went to the workshop and asked the workers to resume their work ; they obeyed me. I wrote to the authorities in the matter but have got no reply so far.

K-218. Has no redress been given at all ?—No, that man is still out of employment.

*Mr. Gregory* : His case is under examination.

*The witness* : I do not know. Several applications were made to the Agent, but so far we have not received any reply.

K-219. Then you refer to a strike in 1922. May I know what strike you refer to ?—It was anticipated that a strike might come off at the time of the visit of the Prince of Wales and it was our idea to compromise things ; we approached the Agent and the Government of India ; the Government of India was making a settlement with me and Mr. Hall, the President of the Union at that time, but in the meanwhile Mr. Miller was arrested. The settlement had already broken down but no strike came off.

K-220. So actually there was no strike ?—No.

K-221. You had the privilege accorded to you of collecting your subscriptions through the salary bills ?—Yes, we had.

K-222. Did you pay anything towards the collection of subscriptions ?—Yes, we paid something.

K-223. Were you aware that the privilege was accorded to you for one year only in order to assist you ?—Yes, we were aware of that. But we naturally expected that it would be continued.

K-224. Have you ever attended any meeting when officers make selections or promotions ?—No.

K-225. Then on what do you base your statement in the memorandum that "the question of seniority and efficiency has very little consideration at present in the eyes of the railway officials but the selection is governed by political, racial, and personal considerations."?—I base that statement on facts which have come to my notice in my experience of the last ten years. I have made this complaint in the press also.

K-226. If you have not attended any meeting of the officers when promotion or selection was being made, are you justified in making that statement?—Yes, because we know many instances of railway men who have suffered through the favouritism of these officers. Moreover we are not allowed to attend these meetings.

K-227. *Mr. Joshi* : Can you send some concrete instances to the Commission?—Yes.

K-228. *Mr. Gregory* : When was Mr. Hazeltine appointed to effect retrenchment in the clerical establishment?—In 1922.

K-229. Who was the agent then?—Mr. Hadow.

K-230. In your memorandum you say : "A good number of skilled and unskilled labourers have been thrown out of work since 1922 and new employment of such labour has nearly remained suspended for the last five or six years." Do you mean to say that we have not made any recruitments?—You have cut down the total strength of workshop employees to 50 per cent. of what it was in 1920.

K-231. You also say that "the railway also began to recruit the same labour at a lower rate whenever they wanted men, and in many cases gave them lower wages than what they were drawing at the time of the discharge." If that is the case how can you say that the railway did not recruit any further labour?—As a temporary arrangement they recruited labour. But they did not increase the total strength. On the other hand the total strength has been reduced.

K-232. You mean to say that we did not increase the total strength in the workshops, but for filling temporary vacancies we took on men who had been employed before?—Yes, but on lower wages in many cases.

K-233. In your memorandum you say that "since the general reductions have taken place, skilled and unskilled labour to the extent of 50 per cent. have been unemployed as the private agencies in the Punjab have no scope for employing such a big number as has been retrenched." Have you any authenticated statistical returns or other figures to show that it is 50 per cent.?—Yes, the number now employed is half the number employed in 1920. There was a big reduction in the workshops in 1926.

K-234. Do you really say that there has been a reduction of 50 per cent. in the workshops?—The Karachi and Rawalpindi shops were closed and the Kalka and Lahore shops were reduced ; as a result the total strength in all the shops taken together has been reduced to 50 per cent.

K-235. While you were in service did you ever receive any medical assistance at any time from Sub-Assistant Surgeons, travelling or otherwise?—Yes, I did.

K-236. In your memorandum dealing with medical assistance you say : "Along with the benefits there is a great drawback and that is, that as according to railway rules, a railway servant cannot absent himself on



medical grounds from his duties unless he obtains a certificate from the railway doctor to that effect, the doctors trouble the employees by not granting them certificates when they duly require it, just to snatch something out of their pockets, which the poor labourers do pay when hard-pressed." Is that your personal experience?—Yes, I had to pay Rs. 16 myself to get a certificate for two months' leave.

K-237. *Mrs. Wilson* : What is the grade of the officer who received Rs. 16?—He is a Civil Surgeon.

K-238. *Mr. Gregory* : Did you report the fact to the authorities?—No.

K-239. In other words you accepted a certificate on payment?—Yes, we had to do that to meet our requirements.

K-240. You say further that "in places outside towns it is said they are attended by Railway Travelling Doctors, but rarely they avail themselves of these doctors, so far as the medical treatment is concerned." But you yourself said just now that you had treatment from these travelling doctors. Is it your opinion that the majority of the staff do not make use of these doctors?—Some people do and some do not make use of these doctors.

K-241. So they are of some assistance to the staff?—Yes, they are of some assistance to the staff. I did not say they were not.

K-242. Referring to bathing and washing arrangements you say that "these are nowhere available except in a few places in the European quarters." Are not quarters designed making suitable provision for bathing and washing arrangements?—Such arrangements are provided in the European quarters, but not in the Indian quarters. Of course those Indians who rise to higher grades which are generally held by Europeans, get all the privileges which the Europeans get. But in the case of the subordinate staff drawing less than Rs. 150 a month, they get only such class of accommodation where bathing and washing rooms are not provided.

K-243. Have you seen the various standard plans?—The new plans approved by the Secretary of State contain appreciable improvements.

K-244. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : These improvements are to be made in the new quarters that are to be built in future, but at present they have not been built for people to live in?—No, it is only for the future.

K-245. *Mr. Gregory* : Have you studied the Workmen's Compensation Act?—Yes, to some extent.

K-246. Is there any penalty for people who do not report accidents?—Yes, but workmen do not know of it. It has not been made known to them.

K-247. Are not payments of compensation made through the Commissioner?—No, they are paid directly by the railway, as soon as an accident report is submitted and the claim is made.

K-248. Is it not a fact that a copy of the report has to be lodged with the Commissioner under the Act?—Yes, it is so. But in some cases reports are not made. That is our grievance.

K-249. Are there many of these cases? Can you give a list of such cases?—There are not many cases; they are few and far between. I shall submit a statement afterwards.

K-250. Have you studied the Washington Convention ?—So far as the hours of work and rest are concerned, I have studied them.

K-251. In your memorandum you make a statement that the International Labour Conference held at Washington passed a resolution of 48 hours a week, but the Government of India accepted it for 60 hours. Are you not aware that Article 10 of that Convention accepts the principle of 60 hours work for India ?—Because the Government of India accepted that, they too had to accept it ; but as a matter of fact the main convention was for 48 hours : the Government of India ratified it for 60 hours.

K-252. Again, in your memorandum you say that the doors of justice are entirely shut. Are there no channels of appeal from an individual to a senior officer in the railway ?—They always get a stereotyped reply.

K-253. Are there no channels through which one can appeal ?—The channels are not sufficiently open to allow appeals being considered in a justifiable manner.

K-254. Have not individuals appealed and have not their cases been dealt with ?—So far as I can gather from the number of cases that have been reported, when I raised the question in the Assembly, it was stated that out of one lakh and so many thousand appeals made by the staff only one thousand odd grievances were redressed.

K-255. So you do not mean that the doors of justice are entirely shut ?—It amounts to that. If we get only half justice, that is no justice.

K-256. You say that the Agent, North-Western Railway, worked out figures and arrived at a living wage of Rs. 11-4-0. Can you give me the details of how this Rs. 11-4-0 was worked out ?—It was in the year 1921, and they worked out the figure to Rs. 11-4-0, by calculating the prices for *atta* and other foodstuffs.

K-257. Can you give me a detailed statement as to how that figure was arrived at ?—I will send you the figures.

K-258. *Mr. Ram Autar* : Mr. Khan, I believe you were the General Secretary when your Union was recognized ?—Yes.

K-259. There was a fight between you and Mr. Miller after his return from jail ?—That was not the case. Certain executive officials of the Union, who were railway servants, were, I believe, hired for the purpose of expelling me against the wishes of the members as a whole.

K-260. There was the Central Committee and the Executive Committee, and they dismissed you ?—I was sent on compulsory leave, and then in my absence these people got together and passed a resolution of dismissal, without framing a charge or anything of that kind. It was a pre-arranged plot.

K-261. Was there any Central Committee governing the Union at that time ?—There was a Central Committee governing the Union, but the Committee that passed the resolution was not a committee elected by the men.

K-262. I believe the Central Committee was the same when you were General Secretary ?—No, it was changed at that time. You got your own men to do it.

K-263. And you were dismissed by that Committee ?—I do not remember ; it was what I heard.

K-264. And the charges framed against you were that you were unscrupulous ?—You might frame anything because you are in the hands of the officials.

*The Chairman* : I do not think we can pursue this further.

K-265. *Mr. Ghani* : Mr. Khan, in reply to the first question of the Chairman you said that you were the General Secretary and the acting President of the Union. So far as my experience goes, and I believe it is also your experience, unions, associations and societies have a certain individual as the president and a different individual as the secretary. You suggest that you are both the President and the Secretary of this Union ?—It is like this. Recently Mr. Evans, Deputy Inspector General of Police, had an interview with me and he suggested to me that the President, Dr. Satyapal, should be removed from his position as President because of his being a political man, and that then our Union would be recognized. Our Committee agreed to that. We waited on the railway authorities for the selection of a new President and for the grant of recognition to our Union ; our members suggested that I should undertake both the duties, and therefore I am acting President for the time being, in the interests of the Union and to meet the wishes of the authorities as well to some extent.

K-266. Do I understand, that you could not find any other suitable individual in the Punjab and in the whole of India to act as the President of the Union ?—We cannot. We have to meet the wishes of the railway authorities to some extent in this respect, and then decide about the President.

K-267. Do I take it that you would always elect your President in accordance with the wishes of the authorities ?—When we have to co-operate with them, we would like to have their consultation, even though we may not be compelled to act according to it.

K-268. May I know if it is permissible under the Trade Unions Act ?—The Act permits the appointment of any man as the President.

K-269. By selection or by election ?—By election. The election is made according to our own rules

K-270. Is your President selected or elected ?—He is to be elected through certain channels.

K-271. Supposing your Central Committee were to select one Mr. A., and the railway authorities were to dislike that person, you would not have that person as your President ?—It would be our intention in the first instance to explain to the people that in order to co-operate with the authorities we should prefer such and such a man. If they do not agree, we will have another man. It will not affect our Union in any way.

K-272. From your answer to the question it would appear that you would even evade the law in order to win the co-operation of the railway authorities ?—The law does not bind us down at all. We will follow the rules, and we will elect the President.

K-273. Not the authorities?—Not the authorities at all.

K-274. In your memorandum you profess to deal with “A brief history of the labour movement in the Punjab”, but actually you give a brief history of the railway labour movement. Do I understand that the heading is not correct?—It is quite correct, because there is no other union as compared with the Railway Union. The Railway Union is the pioneer of all labour movement in the Punjab. There was no labour movement before that in the Punjab.

K-275. Are there certain other Unions besides your Union?—There are, but they are very insignificant.

K-276. You have been good enough to give us a statement of your accounts, from which I find that you have spent all the money that came to you. Have you any balance now?—We have Rs. 5,000 in reserve and some Rs. 500 on current account.

K-277. Do I understand that at the time this balance sheet was prepared the Rs. 5,000 were not on deposit?—That is so.

K-278. I understand that your chief grievance is as regards the recognition of the Unions. What exactly do you mean by the word “recognition”?—That the officials should co-operate and that we should co-operate with the officials; that they should receive our deputations, acknowledge our letters, and give certain other facilities essential for the running of a union.

K-279. Can the object of corresponding with the authorities as regards individual matters not be achieved in some other way?—It is not a question only of individual cases. It has also to do with collective bargaining on behalf of our members.

K-280. You say you are against the employment of contractors. What other method would you suggest?—The railway is a nationalized business. Therefore there should be no contracting done by the railway. It undermines the value of labour. For this reason we are against the employment of contractors.

K-281. With regard to what you say about the Punjab Government being pleased to grant a free lease of a vast land, has the land been given free of all cost by the Government to the employees for quarters there?—Yes, or at a very nominal value.

K-282. Are you referring to the clerks' quarters?—No.

K-283. You say something about section 138 of the Railway Act as regards evictions of the workers from their quarters. Do you think this section is sometimes misused when there is a strike?—It is especially misused during strikes by the authorities.

K-284. When there is a strike do you think that this section ought not to be used at all?—I think this section should be abolished.

K-285. Do I understand from you that so long as an employee is on strike he should still be supposed to be an employee?—When the strike is legal, eviction should not take place.

K-286. You say something about latrines. Do the workers use the latrines to the fullest extent?—They are compelled to make use of them because they have not any alternative.

K-287. Have you been to any latrines ?—Many.

K-288. What is the condition of the latrines near the workshops ?—There is no drainage.

K-289. Is the condition of the latrines very bad indeed ?—It wants improving.

K-290. You say “ The North-Western Railway have their own employees to look into the application of the existing Factories Act and in case of breach of law very little action is taken ”. Do I take it that Inspectors of Factories in the Punjab do not visit the workshops ?—I have found out that some of them do. I admit that.

K-291. You say something about the conditions of the workshops during hot weather. Do the workers feel any discomfort in doing their work inside the workshop in the hot weather ?—On some occasions. We have made representations to the authorities. In some places the men work in the open.

K-292. Have the authorities done anything in the matter ?—Not sufficient.

K-293. *Dr. Hiteshi* : You are supposed to be the premier labour leader in the Punjab. Why have you always been anxious to have your Union recognized by the railway authorities ? Why not by the public ?—Because members employed on the railway are Government servants, and it is essential that the recognition should be there so as to have co-operation with the authorities in order to satisfy our members.

K-294. Supposing the railway authorities do not offer you any facilities in the matter of collecting subscriptions from the labourers, would you still like to have your Union recognized by the railway authorities ?—Yes.

K-295. Do you think that all these strikes go in favour of the labourers ?—Sometimes they do and sometimes they do not.

K-295a. I would like to know from you whether it is not easy to exploit labour in the Punjab, the labourers being quite illiterate ?—What do you mean by exploitation ?

K-295b. What I mean to say is that you can go to a factory, collect subscriptions from the workers and bring them on to your register, although most of them do not know what a labour movement is and do not take interest in such a movement. You can say, for instance, that you have 10,000 men on your roll and make use of this point in political agitations in the province.

*The Chairman* : I do not think it is worthwhile asking the present witness to answer that question.

K-296. *Dr. Hiteshi* : Your statement of account shows that a large amount of money in the shape of subscriptions has been realised from the poor workers. Have you taken any practical steps to alleviate their suffering in any way with the amount realised from them ?—We have collected that fund, in the first instance, to organize the Union ; when the Union is established and is recognized then begins the real work. For the organization of a union you must have some funds and

that is why you are not able to have one union in the Punjab, if I may be excused for saying so.

K-297. Would you like to have your Union affiliated with any central body in the Punjab ?—Our Union has already been affiliated to the Central Labour Federation ; there is no other central body than this in the Punjab.

K-298. Who is the President and the General Secretary of this Federation ?—I am the President and Mr. Hasan is the General Secretary.

K-299. You would like to have your Union only affiliated to a federation of which you are the head ?—That is natural, because the federation is brought into being by the leaders of the Unions and not by outsiders like you if you will excuse me for saying so.

K-300. *Mrs. Wilson* : Would you be willing, in the case of a dispute between a private practitioner's certificate and a railway doctor's certificate, that the matter should be settled by an impartial board ?—No.

K-301. Have you reasons to suppose that some railway workers have been penalized on account of the venereal disease ?—Yes, there have been cases.

K-302. I ask that because it is difficult to treat the women and children if the worker will not admit that he has venereal disease before the railway doctor ?—They will not go to the railway doctor for that reason.

K-303. *Miss Power* : Do I gather from your memorandum that your contention is that there should be no wage paid by the railway below Rs. 50 a month ?—That is right. That is necessary for the essentials of a human being, such as, education, medical aid, clothing, housing and living.

K-304. *Mr. Taylor* : Does that also apply to the menial staff, like *chaprasis* ?—Yes.

K-305. *Mr. Joshi* : Is it a fact that the larger part of the membership of your Union is drawn from the workshops and the loco sheds ?—Yes.

K-306. And the other Union has got a membership proportionately larger on the line than you have ?—There are not many on the line. As I have said, they are only 300 in number.

K-307. But on the whole they are doing some work for the people on the line and you really stand for the workshop and the loco. shed men ?—We could not enlist the superior staff for want of recognition of our Union.

K-308. I am not asking you the reason. What I want to know is this—whether in actual fact there is real rivalry between the two Unions ?—No, there is no real rivalry, because they represent the superior subordinates and we represent the labour throughout the North-Western Railway.

K-309. Is there any difficulty on account of this rivalry of the two Unions in recognizing your Union ?—There is no real difficulty.

K-310. In reply to a question you said that demands were not formulated before the strike of 1920. Is it a fact that after the strike the conditions of the men were improved ?—They were.

K-311. Am I right therefore in saying that the men had their grievances, and that those grievances as a result of the strike were at least partially removed ?—The strike was the result of those grievances ; the officials had known about those grievances through different channels prior to the strike.

K-312. Referring to the Trade Union Congress of India in your memorandum you say : “ Delegates and advisers for Geneva Conference are sent according to the recommendations of that Congress even though the registered bodies of different provinces may nominate some other people as advisers and delegates for the International Labour Conference.” Can you point out any instance of a delegate proposed by the Trade Union Congress and sent to Geneva who had smaller support than the persons recommended by some individual Unions ?—I have not made any attack in that respect. I have only said that the recommendation of the Trade Union Congress is accepted ; I do not know whether it is right or wrong but the recommendations of other Unions are not accepted.

K-313. It means that you have a grievance that the recommendations of the other unions have not been accepted : Might it not be likely that the recommendations of the other unions were not as strongly supported as the recommendations of the Trade Union Congress ?—I admit that from the point of view of Government they should accept the recommendations of the most representative body.

K-314. Therefore may I take it that the All-India Trade Union Congress is a more representative body ?—Yes, in the view of Government.

K-315. What is your opinion ?—Unless it is registered I cannot say whether it is correct or not. Your report referred to unions which did not then exist in the Punjab.

K-316. Do you know how many trade unions affiliated to the Trade Union Congress are registered ?—I do not know. The Trade Unions Act came into operation in 1927 and I have not seen a copy of your report after that.

K-317. If almost all the unions affiliated to the Trade Union Congress are registered what is your objection to Government accepting its recommendations as coming from a most representative body ?—My objection would still stand, because I want the All-India Trade Union Congress itself to be registered just as any other Trade Union.

K-318. Have you ever considered whether the rate of compensation for accidents is adequate or not ?—In my opinion it is not inadequate under the present circumstances.

K-319. *Mr. Clow* : How many members of the committee of the Karachi Wagon Shop belong to your union ?—25 out of the 30 members belong to our union.

K-320. What is the attitude of your union towards the introduction of the system of "payment by results" or "piece-work system"?—The whole staff was against that system.

K-321. In your memorandum you say that "workmen to improve the output should be given a temptation in the form of shares in the profits." Surely what the railway is doing is an attempt to meet that view?—There is a lot of difference between the piece-work system and the system of profit sharing to which I have alluded. In the latter case if an employee puts his shoulder to the wheel earnestly and increases the output of the concern, he is given a share of the profits whatever it may be. But in the present case, the employer fixes the rate of wages without reference to the profits of the concern, and if an employee increases his output in order to earn a bonus, in course of time the employer reduces the rate and brings it to the level of the net earning capacity.

K-322. But has the railway done that with their workmen?—That has been the inevitable consequence everywhere in India. We know that from the experience of workers who come to us from various parts of India and who have been the victims of this system. In the North-Western Railway they have not reduced it for the present, because they could not reduce it on account of our strong agitation.

K-323. In your memorandum you say that the strikers are given 24 to 48 hours' notice to vacate the railway quarters. Are we to take it that on every occasion on which a strike has taken place every striker was given 24 to 48 hours' notice to vacate the quarters?—Generally they wait for a few days expecting to break the strike; but when they come to know that it is impossible, they adopt this measure.

K-324. Are you in favour of the weekly payment of wages?—Yes.

K-325. You do not think that the money-lender will charge a higher rate of interest?—There will then be no need to borrow at all.

K-326. Even for things like marriages?—They can save from their weekly wages just as they save from their wages as at present paid. They could put by something in the savings banks.

K-327. They could; but do you suggest that weekly payment of wages will drive out indebtedness altogether?—No, indebtedness will not disappear until the wages are improved.

K-328. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: In your memorandum you refer to the gratuity of the strikers being withheld. Will you explain what it means?—The railway authorities have fixed a certain sum, *viz.*, 15 days' pay for every year of service, to be paid to an employee as a bonus after completion of a certain number of years of service. In the case of the strikers they issued orders that those who had been discharged and had service under 15 years to their credit would not get any gratuity.

K-329. It only means that those who had not served for 15 years could not come under the scheme. But in the case of the men who were discharged on the closing of the Rawalpindi carriage shops, the railway paid gratuities to those who had put in three years' service and more.



K-330. It only shows that in some cases the Railway Administration paid gratuities to men who had not put in 15 years' service and therefore were not entitled to them ; but in the case of the strikers they kept their legal rights ?—Yes, and they withheld the bonus from the men.

K-331. In the Railway Board Memorandum it is stated that on the conclusion of the strike most of the men were re-instated on the old rates of pay and the break in service was condoned ?—Yes, they took as many men as they wanted for their work and discharged those they did not want and those that had been put on the black list.

K-332. So most of the men must have been re-instated ; there could only be a few who were not ?—They re-instated only just the number which was necessary to meet their requirements.

K-333. Is there a seriously large number who are still to be re-instated ?—There are still about 2,000 men roaming about without employment.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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**Colonel C. S. M. C. WATSON, D.S.O., O.B.E.,** Chief Operating Superintendent, and **Mr. A. K. MUIRHEAD,** Deputy Agent (Personnel), North Western Railway.

K-334. *The Chairman* : Colonel Watson, will you tell us the nature of your office, and how long you have held it ?—I am the Chief Operating Superintendent, in charge of the running of the North Western Railway. I have held the post for about three years.

K-335. And you, Mr. Muirhead ?—I am the Deputy Agent in charge of the Personnel, and I have held the post since April last.

K-336. The latter post is a new departure on the part of the railway ?—No, I succeeded Mr. Gregory. He was the Deputy Agent (Personnel). The post came into existence in 1924.

K-337. How long have you been in the railway Service ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : 22 years.

K-338. I take it that the North Western Railway system, although perhaps not quite the largest in personnel, is the largest in length of line in India ?—(*Colonel Watson*) : Yes.

K-339. The number of railway workers in India as a whole amounts to 800,000. Of these, roughly speaking, 122,400 are employed on the North Western Railway ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : That is so.

K-340. In the memorandum submitted to us by the Railway Board, there are certain figures of staff which do not quite agree with those submitted to us by the North Western Railway. Could you explain them ?—The difference may be due to the fact that temporary labour force on constructions may not have been included in the Railway Board's figures. I am afraid I cannot give the exact reasons for that now.

K-341. We were very much interested yesterday in being shown something about your new departure in your Labour Bureau. I take it that is

an effort of the North Western Railway to provide a channel through which the grievances of all the workers can be heard ?—Entirely.

K-342. You have only had that system in operation for a short period ?—Since about a year.

K-343. And you have brought before us some specimen minutes of the sittings of the Committee of that Bureau ?—Yes, I have.

K-344. What is the method of election of the representatives. We understood that 27 out of the 30 members of the Committee are elected in the shop ?—All the 30 members are elected in the shop. There are 27 vacancies which are allotted to the artisans, semi-skilled and unskilled labour ; two vacancies are allotted to the supervising staff and one to the clerical staff that is also employed in the shops, making 30 in all—entirely elected.

K-345. Will you describe to us exactly how the election takes place in the works, the method of nomination, the election of the presiding officer, and so on ?—The process has to be as simple as possible. We decide on the best means of getting proper representation in lateral lines of the various classes of labour that we employ in the shops. Having come to the conclusion that 30 would be a reasonable number we issued a simple series of rules for the regulation of the election. The shop was divided into two main parts, the iron workers and the wood workers. Having divided that up, we allowed a certain number of representatives for each class of employee, that is, *mistris*, skilled labourers, semi-skilled labourers, and unskilled labourers in each of these two main parts. We then invited the labourers to come forward and nominate their candidates for the election. First of all we asked them to nominate their candidates for election, and then the general election was held afterwards, more or less on the lines of municipal elections. Each voter was allowed to vote for two vacancies if there were two, in his class of employee. We put responsible officers in charge of the ballot boxes here, who were not really concerned with the workshops themselves, and the men were allowed to come up and vote for whoever they wanted to. In the voting forms we gave the names of those who had stood for election, and had been duly nominated.

K-346. Did you find a readiness to nominate and to vote ?—There was a slight difficulty at first. From the enquiries I made—I was naturally very interested—it appeared that certain Union people were trying to dissuade the men from coming forward readily at first unless the nominees were Union men. They wanted to capture the seats on the Staff Council. But beyond that I think there was no hesitancy at all.

K-347. But you have not put any bar against the Union men being elected ?—No. It was not a matter in which we took the Union into consideration at all. It was merely our own arrangement to establish a contact, a better contact between the management and the illiterate workers, principally. That was our intention.

K-348. With regard to the housing policy of your railway, it has been suggested to us that there is no adequate housing for your people in the circumstances where you have a large number of them gathered together ; that you rely too much upon the accommodation in the neigh-

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bourhood, which may lead to overcrowding and discomfort. Can you tell us what is the policy of your Company in regard to this matter?—This question of housing goes back to a very long period. At one time it was very difficult to get particularly the illiterate man, the daily rated man, to live away from the cities. He had certain facilities there; he had joint houses and things like that, which he shared with other members of his family, and he preferred to live in the city. In those days our workshops were not situated where they are now. They were more close to the railway station. Then we shifted the workshops out. A demand arose for housing, and a number of our workers started to migrate from the city and take up their residence in outlying villages near to the localities where our workshops are now situated. These villages were insignificant little places, but they have gradually grown up to reasonably sized places. I am thinking particularly of a place called Bhagwanpur, which has grown up out of all recognition since our workshops were started. It is very difficult really to say to what extent the demand exists. There are certain men who do not appreciate any movement in that direction. They would rather remain independent of the railway. Others perhaps would take up the houses that we are able to build. The policy would be to provide a number of houses sufficient for a certain proportion of the men. That would really be the idea. That would be the object we would try to achieve, and see how it works. If they were taken up readily, we would be prepared to extend it; but there are other points of view. We are an Imperial Government concern—we are not a provincial concern, and perhaps the Provincial Government should step in with a scheme to provide for the congestion that they complain of in the city. It is a matter for investigation—the building of a sufficient number of houses to relieve that congestion. There is no reason why our men should not be treated just the same way as the other citizens of Lahore.

K-349. Then, I take it, that the North Western Railway have not at present any definite policy of building houses for their workers?—We have considered the question of building houses from time to time; it is a question of utilizing money in places where it is more keenly required.

K-350. The simple answer is that you have no decided policy in that direction?—No, not as regards the shops.

K-351. *Mr. Sastri* : May I take it that as regards the attitude of the railway to Trade Unions, you have a free hand, or is it a policy which you have to adopt at the instance of the Railway Board?—(*Colonel Watson*) : No, the Railway Board encourages railways to consult together, but they do not force any policy on us.

K-352. So you have a comparatively free hand?—Yes.

K-353. I see you give very interesting information about the unions in connection with the railways here, and you have also got a detailed list of instructions to your men as to how to deal with communications or requests for interviews from unions. May I take it that it is now recognized that the interests of employees may be served by the existence of these trade unions and by their proper functioning. It is now generally recognized that trade unions are of general importance in improving the conditions of employees?—Yes.

K-354. The hope that it may be possible to get on without trade unions has now gone and it is realised that trade unions have come to stay.

If they have come to stay, I suppose it is better that they should exist in an efficient condition ?—Yes.

K-355. That they should have as large a membership as possible, that their leaders should be properly chosen, and that you should recognize them as a legitimate means of improving the conditions of the workers ?—Yes.

K-356. Are you satisfied that the rules you have drawn up will make for that object ? I see you prescribe a certain course of conduct to your officials “ until the formation of staff councils ” ?—Yes.

K-357. What does that mean ?—Owing to the absence of any committee such as we have now set up in the workshop, we have granted certain facilities with respect to leave and passes to union workers. It was felt that so long as we had not provided a means of our own for the members of staff councils to represent such items that do not really form the subject of consideration by a union proper, the help that we are giving to the union should be allowed to continue in the way of casual leave and passes.

K-358. Would that mean that as soon as your staff councils take definite shape, you would discontinue the concessions that you now allow to trade union officials ?—We do not consider that we were called upon to grant special casual leave or passes for union work which ought to be done outside the railway office hours.

K-359. In your memorandum you mention under five headings, the nature of the activities of the unions. I notice that under each union you make comments like this : “ Since 1921 it has steadily declined and it has now shrunk to insignificance ” ; “ The activities of the General Workers’ Union do not appear to have anything in common with the ideals of unionism ” ; then I see “ Nil ” under another head. These comments suggest that these unions are in a very anæmic condition and that there is no union which could be said to be prosperous or helpful to the railway ?—That is so.

K-360. Do you think it is a correct attitude on your part to take up towards these unions, to threaten them with the withdrawal of passes and other concessions ; do you think that is likely to help them to prosper, increase in strength and become what they ought to be, and what they in fact are in organizations similar to yours ?—Since 1920 we have given them facilities to organize themselves. I think it will be accepted that 9 years is a sufficient time for them to develop on union lines with the facilities that we have afforded.

K-361. Then you seem to be getting perilously near the conclusion that on your railway the unions may not prosper at all, and it is therefore best not to give them too much encouragement ?—We have given them all the encouragement we could give them, and the unions themselves have disintegrated from time to time.

K-362. I am sorry that is so, but should not the railway still try to give them another chance. If I were a railway official I might consider the fostering of these unions as part of my ordinary duty ; I would take the officials and members in hand, constantly talking to them, establishing a sympathetic attitude between them, and see that the unions get on their feet ?—Yes, that is done.

K-363. But "until the formation of staff councils" is a somewhat menacing statement in that connection. I suppose the question of the discrimination made between classes or races of your employees is too big a question to take up to-day; but I suppose it is the general policy of the railway to reduce the grievances under this head and to remedy as soon as possible striking cases?—(*Col. Watson*): The policy of the railway has been for some time to have no discrimination at all. There is no discrimination now.

K-364. If you read the two memoranda of the two trade unions you will probably form a different conclusion. With regard to the service agreement as to which there is a good deal of complaint, may I ask what is the chief difference between a dismissal and a discharge?—(*Mr. Muirhead*): A discharge is merely that we give the man a legitimate notice of our decision to terminate his services in the same way as he would give us notice if he wanted to cease to be employed. That entails no penalties in regard to his bonus or whatever gratuity he may have earned. We reserve to ourselves the right to discharge an employee without assigning any reason, because when an employee terminates his service with us, we do not ask him for any reasons why he has done so, or anything of that sort. The actual discharge may be due to the fact that the man is inefficient or we do not require to keep him. In the case of dismissal it is a matter of terminating his services for some deliberate or serious offence.

K-365. So that I take it that as between a dismissal and a discharge, to an individual official a discharge is a more favourable course of treatment?—Yes.

K-366. In the memoranda we have read these discharges are the subject of bitter complaint. I tried to find out the reason and I spell it out in this way: that the administration consider it more convenient to adopt the discharge form where a man has proved himself burdensome or unnecessary, instead of instituting a trial as it were, and giving him an opportunity of defending himself, when he may be acquitted. The administration chose the more convenient method of discharge, and therefore, they say, this power of discharge is being utilized somewhat illegitimately and excessively, being operated in a way to get rid of more people than it would be possible to get rid of if the dismissal course were adopted?—There are several reasons for a discharge. We may discharge a man simply because we are reducing establishment; the cumulative effect of a man's inefficiency may lead to his discharge. We may discharge a man who ordinarily, in any commercial business, would be dismissed from service; we discharge him because we do not wish to penalize him, as he would be, if he were dismissed. But the number of discharges is not so great as is made out.

K-367. The complaint obviously is that administratively your discharge seems to be the means of a larger riddance than might be possible by dismissal?—That is only natural.

K-368. If there were any truth in it, I might suggest to you that it was a matter for enquiry and investigation?—No discharge takes place without careful scrutiny.

K-369. I want to ask your opinion about one of the suggestions made by the trade unions; they say that all important orders should be given after investigation by a committee composed equally of officials of the

railway and representatives of the work-people, with a non-official public man as chairman ?—We do not consider that practicable.

K-370. Do you envisage a far off future when with trade unionism properly developed such a thing might be thought of ?—I do not think it is workable.

K-371. You do not think it would be workable even when trade unions are properly established ?—No ; it would be very good if it could be done, but I do not think it is possible.

K-372. *Sir Alexander Murray* : One of the witnesses representing the trade unions who appeared before us this morning said, if I remember rightly, that he did not object to the wording of the service agreement in itself, provided he could be assured that there would be no victimization under it. Can you recall instances verging on victimization in the eyes of the union ?—In every case where a man who happens to be a member of a union is discharged or dismissed from the railway, he cries “Victimization”.

K-373. I understand the bulk of the members of your present committee are members of unions ; if you dispense with their services, you run the risk of severe strikes and troubles ?—Yes.

K-374. In the memorandum of the Punjab Government it is said that railway coolies are better off than the class of people from which they are drawn in the surrounding districts ; have you anything to say about that ?—Yes, we think that our men are better off. I have made enquiries from time to time and find that our coolies are offered as good wages as they are in the open market ; they have better and regular hours of work and security of tenure.

K-375. When considering the rates of wages you give to your coolies, do you take into account the rates ruling in the vicinity ?—We have to.

K-376. What else do you take into account ?—The unskilled coolie will go where he is paid best ; that is our experience.

K-377. You pay so well that you never have a shortage of unskilled coolies. As regards skilled workers what are the factors that you take into account ?—Practically the same ; we give them certain benefits—passes and paid holidays and things like that.

K-378. All of which goes to make the railway service more attractive ?—Yes.

K-379. There was a Railway Conference at Simla last month, and Sir Ernest Jackson in his speech at the Conference said that if an increase of 50 per cent. or even more in wages were given to many of the manual labourers they would not be better off at the end than they were at the beginning. What have you to say about that ?—Coolies are a very improvident people ; they do not benefit themselves so much as they benefit money-lenders and people of that sort.

K-380. Do you attach any weight to a suggestion that instead of giving an increase in wages you should attempt to improve the standard of living of your workers in other directions, by giving them better housing, better water-supply, better conservancy, better lighting, more education, sports and amusements ?—Yes ; we endeavour to do that.

K-381. But you replied to the Chairman that you have not really laid down any policy as to housing ?—I qualified that by saying that our policy in regard to housing did not affect the shops ; we have 120,000 odd men spread over 6,000 miles of line.

K-382. I am talking more of your duty as one of the largest employers of workshop labour. Have you embarked on a policy to make the life more attractive ?—No.

K-383. When we were at Karachi we found that a Government Officer who was sent up from Bombay had recommended that large employers of labour should build quarters for their staff. When we were at Sukkur we saw the need for better housing for labour. Both the Unions that appeared before us this morning have emphasized the necessity for better living conditions and better quarters. In Bengal, from which I come, the employers in jute mills, tea gardens and coal mines have built extensive quarters for their workers. Do you not think the time has come for you to do the same thing here ?—There is just this difference. In Lahore, for instance, as I pointed out, the large majority of the labour comes from the city ; they are residents of Lahore, unlike, we will say, your labour in Bengal.

K-384. Quite true ; our labour in Bengal is largely imported—even to the extent of 90 to 95 per cent. in some big towns.—I say that we should, if we had the money, build a certain number of houses for a portion of the staff because I do not believe that the whole of them would appreciate it.

K-385. Do you not think it would be better to provide either free or cheap quarters than to give cash increases which, according to Sir Ernest Jackson, will go into the pockets of the money-lenders and will not benefit the workers ?—Again, the point is that there are certain classes of labour which merely consider the question of rupees, annas and pies. They are accustomed to living in mud huts or a bit of thatch over a wall ; if you give them quarters and say “ This is in lieu of rupees ”, they will not appreciate it so well.

K-386. I see that in reply to a deputation received by the Agent three or four years ago he said that the policy of the Board is to provide suitable quarters in healthy surroundings, for as large a proportion of the staff as may be practicable, at places where private enterprise does not adequately meet the demand for housing the staff. That I suppose sums up your policy ?—Yes.

K-387. Mr. Sastri talked to you about staff committees and trade unions. I suppose you have read a good deal of literature regarding staff committees, welfare committees and trade boards at Home ?—Yes.

K-388. Can you give me instances in which staff committees or trade boards are made use of ?—I cannot say in which instances one or the other is used.

K-389. I think, speaking generally, all the large organizations at Home, such as the miners, the engineers, the cotton trade and the railways, prefer to work through trade unions. You are a bigger organization here than most of the organizations at home and yet you feel that the trade union is not a feasible proposition here ?—We have so many different types of men to deal with ; they are, strictly speaking, of different nationalities.

K-390. Then you can have two or three unions ?—But you have men of different nationalities serving in one category ; that is a further complication.

K-391. You told the Chairman that you are one of the largest employers of labour, your line extends from Karachi to the Khyber, and you have recognized only one Union. Is it a feasible suggestion that there should be only one recognized Union ?—We would be prepared to recognize several unions if they would agree amongst themselves to represent categories of staff. Our difficulty is that one union claims to represent all categories of staff ; then another union is formed by people who have been discharged from the first union and it says that it represents so and so, including the categories which the first union claims to represent.

K-392. I recognize and appreciate your difficulties. It would be much better if different unions represented different categories.—We would prefer that.

K-393. But in view of the thousands of miles over which your railway extends, is it unreasonable to have a union in Karachi, a union in Lahore and a union somewhere else ?—Our railway is divided up into 8 Divisions, each Division being under a Divisional Superintendent. It would be practicable for divisional committees to work in the interests of categories on each particular Division.

K-394. You have sub-divided the whole system into seven Divisions ?—Eight with the workshops.

K-395. You have appointed Personnel Officers to each of these Divisions ?—Yes.

K-396. Would it not be equally suitable to have separate unions in each of these Divisions ?—No ; we are all one administration, and we require co-ordination between one union and another.

K-397. Is there co-ordination between one Personnel Officer and another ?—We provide that co-ordination ; they are under the control of the Central Government here. You might have, for instance, a union in Karachi saying “ We do not want the hours of work to be reduced ” and a union at Lahore saying “ we do want the hours of work to be reduced ”.

K-398. Quite true, but the question rests with you at the headquarters and you can give a decision ?—It will only cause friction ; the union which did not get its own way will say that we are favouring the other union.

K-399. Is not there the same conflict between one Personnel Officer and another ? Does the headquarters not reject the suggestion of one Personnel Officer or Divisional Superintendent and accept that of another ?—But they are disciplined.

K-400. I believe you have recognized the All-India Trade Union organization ?—We have not come into contact with that organization.

K-401. Do you recognize any other union ?—That is our difficulty applicable to all these unions. Having recognized one union which claims to represent all the categories of staff it is not possible for us to recognize any other.



K-402. Do you recognize that there is a difference between a committee and a trade union ?—Oh yes.

K-403. For instance, if a committee made up its mind that a strike was necessary it would not have sufficient funds at its disposal, while a trade union would ?—The committees do not function, in my opinion, as a trade union would function ; they are local in their effect.

K-404. Therefore you can effectively prevent any accumulation of funds which would enable the workers to go on strike if they so desired ?—We are not concerned with that part of their activities.

K-405. I take it that you have no objection to trade unions if they are properly constituted ?—None whatever.

K-406. Apart from the question of the trade union accumulating funds necessary in the event of a strike, it provides the same benefits that you have provided ; for instance, the trade union provides medical attention. You have done that also without the intervention of the trade union ?—Yes, we provide medical attention.

K-407. So that to that extent the trade union will not be necessary ?—Yes.

K-408. I understand that trade unions at home used to provide other benefits, such as unemployment and old age pensions. Do you provide anything of that description here ?—We provide a provident fund, gratuities and passes to our employees.

K-409. You say in your memorandum that to officers who retire from your service you have paid gratuities as high as Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 2,000 and from the Provident Fund sums up to Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 8,000. Do you think that takes the place of the benefits that accrue under a trade union organization ?—Yes, it is much better for these men.

K-410. You are still of opinion that the committee and the trade union can function together and that there is room for both ?—Yes.

K-411. *Mr. Ahmed* : Do you agree with the proposition that the labourers would not be better off even if they were given a 50 per cent. increase in wages, because they would still be the victims of the money-lenders ?—Yes. That applies mainly to coolie labour.

K-412. Can you suggest any method of ameliorating their condition ?—It is very difficult for me to suggest anything. I should think that the unions could help them by giving them advice as to how to avoid these troubles ; co-operative banks may be started to help them.

K-413. Would you start a bank yourself or would you help a bank if started, with funds ?—We have a co-operative credit society for our employees who are literate in the vernaculars and we give them facilities in that way.

K-414. Could you not extend the benefits to the illiterate employees also ?—That question has been considered ; but the unfortunate part of it is that they cannot offer any security for loans and advances that they get from the bank.

K-415. Suppose you retain with you an employee's money to the extent of twice the amount of the loan you advance, would that not be a security for your advances ?—If a man wants to be dishonest he would take good care to move off when we had the least hold over him.

K-416. Since you agree that the labourers will not be better off even if their wages are increased by 50 per cent., what steps have you taken to ameliorate their condition by providing them with suitable houses, drinking water and facilities for the education of their children and sports and games ? Would they not be better off if you helped them in these directions ?—Yes. But education is really not a function that should devolve on the railway administration.

K-417. *Mr. Cliff* : Mr. Muirhead, you are aware that one of the terms of reference of this Commission is to enquire into the relations between employers and work-people.—Yes.

K-418. As I understand it, you are operating a State Railway ?—Yes.

K-419. Amongst the working classes of India you employ something like 120,000 work-people and therefore the attitude of mind displayed by this railway is a very important matter for consideration by this Commission ?—Yes.

K-420. Excuse me therefore if I proceed at some length. In your memorandum you say : “ While the proportion of literates in their own vernacular is small, the proportion of those literate in English is still smaller. The barrier of literacy in some ways forms a gulf as great as caste.” What have you done to bridge this gulf ?—In the staff committees for workshops we have arranged that a literate employee should represent the literate labourers and illiterate employee should represent the illiterate labourers.

K-421. I understand that these staff committees have been appointed within the last four months ?—Yes.

K-422. What is the number of people they represent ?—About 11,000, amongst the workshop employees. We will extend them to what we call extra-divisional workshops, *i.e.*, electrical power house, signal shops and stores. We have also appointed for the Lahore Division as an experimental measure, an Assistant Warden to look after the interests of the illiterate men. There are certain differences in dealing with these men from those in the workshops.

K-423. May I ask you what you did prior to a year or two ago ?—We started some years ago a sort of a committee in the Karachi Wagon shops which died out later on. They used to come regularly and put up their grievances and ask for various things. They do not come nowadays. There is no apparent reason for it ; but the natural conclusion is that they have nothing to complain about. Now we have appointed a new organization which we call the Personnel Branch, which acts as an expert adviser in matters of personnel.

K-424. Is there anything else you have done ?—We have discussed these matters from time to time at meetings of Divisional Superintendents and Personnel Officers and impressed upon the various people as to their manner of treating the staff. We have always looked into cases ourselves where we found that any cause for serious complaint existed.

K-425. Have you any idea, as to the rate of progress you are making when you may expect to cover the whole staff with these committees ?—It

will be a simple matter if we can get the pattern on which to extend. If we find, for instance, that the committee of the Lahore Division functions properly and is of use we can extend that to all the Divisions very rapidly.

K-426. With regard to the policy of the formation of these committees you answered a question by Mr. Sastri and another question by Sir Alexander Murray. I found it difficult to reconcile the two answers. Am I correct in forming the impression that you have proceeded to constitute these committees as a counter or as a substitute to the trade unions?—No. We still continue to give facilities to the recognized union officials.

K-427. But your memorandum speaks of it as being until the formation of these committees. What does that really mean? When the committees are formed are they going to be the machinery through which representations are to be made?—I do not think so.

K-428. The Railway Board in their memorandum, dealing with this particular question say: "It is necessary to keep separate the three ideas of trade unions, conciliation boards and local committees." Later on they go on to say: "Trade unions are the creation of the workers; conciliation boards are due to the intervention of outsiders in the general interests of the public, and the committees are the internal machinery in an industry devised to produce better relations between the employers and their workers, and depend upon the initiative of the employer." Do you subscribe to that?—Yes.

K-429. Is the trade union not to function then in matters arising out of employment?—Yes, it should function.

K-430. Do you think that if you exclude the trade union from considering cognate matters arising out of employment, you are likely to get contentment amongst your work-people?—I do not understand that question.

K-431. *The Chairman*: Perhaps it may be better understood by relation to affairs in England where organization is naturally more advanced. May I put it this way. Do you think there is a necessary contradiction between the work of trade unions and the work of official works committees?—No.

K-432. Or, on the other hand, is it possible that each of these associations has a legitimate sphere in assisting the workers to obtain a hearing for their proposals and the removal of many of their grievances?—I explained to you that our idea is that these staff committees are local and function in a local sphere. It must not be forgotten that the railway is composed of several branches, employing various types of people. You have the Guard, whose duties and whose life are quite a different proposition from that of a workman in the shops. Similarly a Driver is a different being from a Guard, and so on. So that we want local committees. That is what the staff committees are supposed to be.

K-433. But without detriment to the right of unions to take up the larger questions of policy?—Without any detriment to them. It is quite possible that a local matter may come in for treatment by a union, if it affects a larger area.

K-434. *Mr. Cliff* : May I take it that what you are concerned with is a staff committee of particular grades ? Is that what you are concerned to establish ?—Of all the grades in that area.

K-435. How are they to function and on what subjects are they to function ?—For the present we have laid that down.

K-436. If you have a very large body of labourers and they wish to present cases arising out of their employment, are you not of the opinion that they are entitled to aid in presenting their case ?—Yes.

K-437. Who do you suggest should present their case ?—In actual practice they speak about their grievances to the Warden, who is in charge of the Labour Bureau, or any other member of the staff in that Bureau.

K-438. Do you suggest that that is adequate for all purposes arising out of employment ?—That would not prevent them, if any larger issues were at stake, from representing their case outside to a union.

K-439. So that, taking it at that stage, the Warden is only subject to the challenge of an illiterate person, or subject to the challenge of a superior officer who is literate ? Is that the position ?—Yes, that is so ; but the challenge of the first officer is that of a literate person, an officer who is appointed to see that the interests of the employee are watched : that is the Personnel Officer. If necessary he contests the point with the executive officer.

K-440. Is it your view that that is satisfactory ?—Not entirely satisfactory, but it will become satisfactory. It is a new venture, but I hope it will become satisfactory.

K-441. Do you think that person is sufficiently independent to represent the claim ?—Yes, as far as the local effect is concerned.

K-442. Would you yourself accept such a position in your own walk of life ?—I have to accept the position.

K-443. To be represented by a person who is subordinate to the people to whom he makes representations ?—That is my position ; I have to accept it.

K-444. In your memorandum, under the heading of “ General Remarks ”, you say : “ It is argued, not without force, that if a workman is continually obsessed with the idea, that although he is expected to put forth his best in the discharge of the duties allotted to him, he does not earn a living wage and is constantly worried with the necessity of devising means to supplement his income, it is bound to impair his individual efficiency, and thus re-act on the efficiency of the whole concern.” Then you speak of the responsibility that attaches to a person in the position which you are occupying now. Could you tell me why this second trade union was not recognized ?—The second trade union was not recognized because it wanted to represent the interests of a staff which the other trade union already claimed to represent, and we had already recognized that trade union.

K-445. Do you not think that in facing trade union organization on a large system like yours, you will in the early stages have to recognize more than one union even though they are catering for the same class of people ?—I do not see how that will be practicable.

K-446. Are you entitled to require anything more of them than that they should co-ordinate their representation ?—If they could do so and if they would do so, it would probably meet the objection.

K-447. Yes, but at the moment you have not put it to the test, because you have refused to recognize ?—Yes.

K-448. Now it is admitted that with a large degree of illiteracy organization is difficult ?—Yes.

K-449. Speaking of the amalgamation of the East Indian Railway the Railway Board say this : “ It is clear that the process of fusion on the East Indian Railway will take decades to complete.” Now here is an efficient, intelligent literate body like the Railway Board, faced with the problem of fusion, and they declare with wonderful frankness that the task in front of them will take decades to complete ?—That is very easily explained. The East Indian Railway was a Company’s line, which engaged men on different terms to the State Railway men, and it is only natural that when the fusion took place each set of men continued on their own terms of service, and until that has worn off you will have two distinct bodies.

K-450. To obtain some measure of standardization it will take decades ?—It is merely the inherent rights that the men obtain under their particular terms of service. They carry those forward, so that a man who joined the O. and R. Railway at the age of 25 and has to retire at the age of 55, is for 30 years carrying forward the rules under which he was originally engaged. That is the explanation of that.

*Mr. Clifff* : That expresses in a very real way a good deal of the attitude of mind running through the memorandum which has been submitted to the Commission. Problems are so vast that a great deal of patience and a number of years must elapse before one may reach anything like a solution of the problems confronting those who are administrators.

K-451. Is that present to your mind when you are dealing with a body of men who are not anything like the same standard as yourself ? These men will take very many years to achieve the standard that you want them to achieve. I doubt, in your dealings with these trade unions, and by refusing to recognize them, that you have been making clear to them that you want to help. It seems to me you have been hindering them. Do you not think you have ?—I do not agree.

K-452. Mr. Sastri called attention to a suggestion of the Railway Union with regard to dealing with cases on appeal. Your reply was that it was impracticable. Is that due to the volume of disciplinary cases ?—No. It is due to this—that when you are dealing with, say, 100 cases, every one of which will form a matter for discussion, as a business proposition we cannot get on with our job. If we were to deal with the administration of the staff in that way we could not get on with our work.

K-453. Is it within your knowledge that that is done in other parts of the world ?—I do not know.

K-454. Do you anticipate, dealing with the cases of discipline that arise in a public service, you can continue to go along as you have been, and not be subject to challenge ?—We are always subject to challenge.

K-455. By whom ?—By Government.

K-456. Do you suggest that the time of the Legislative Assembly should be taken up in challenging you on cases on appeal ?—We wish it would not be, but it is.

K-457. Do you suggest it should ?—No, I do not think it should.

K-458. Do you agree that you should be subject to challenge ?—Yes.

K-459. Why do you say that the trade union should have no right to make representations on personal appeals ?—I understood the question to mean whether they had a right to decide in discussion with us every case.

K-460. At the moment you say to the trade union “ Unless it affects a particular grade or class, we are not to be subject to challenge ”. Is not that what you say to the trade union ?—In individual cases, yes.

K-461. Can we get clear what you mean by an individual case ? Take a case like this. “ Please inform the following staff that they have been reduced one step in grade for six months in connection with the above noted case ”. This was a complaint from passengers at Rawalpindi being refused admission to the platform in consequence of which they were left behind by the down mail. Is that a case upon which the trade union is entitled to make representations ?—If it involves a principle we admit the right of the trade union to make a representation.

K-462. Can you tell me whether the principle applies here ?—I could not say unless I examined the facts of the case.

K-463. In a public service the running staff must be subject to a very considerable number of reports from the travelling public. Are those cases questions of principle or not ?—We deal with each of those cases on their merits.

K-464. What happens to these people I have just mentioned ? There is a reduction in two cases which means a loss of Rs. 60 ; in another case a reduction which means a loss of Rs. 24, and in another a loss of Rs. 18. Is your decision really subject to challenge by a trade union ? Then there is a certain gentleman who is to be informed that if he does not stop writing on the subject he will be reduced. He has been fined Rs. 10.—Have you got the entire case, or just that one letter ?

K-465. I am just testing the principle by a few cases which are recorded as having occurred. I am taking one or two actual cases to see just where you are challenged. Here is a man fined Rs. 10. I saw the other day a letter in connection with this case, and I asked how many times the man had written, and they replied “ Here are the letters ”. There were three. The final note is “ Tell Mr. so-and-so that if he does not stop writing he will be reduced ” and he has been fined Rs. 10. Can I, as a Union officer, represent that man in a case like that ?—Yes. If you have a principle involved, we will admit the right of a union to represent the case—or where a glaring act of injustice has been done.

K-466. The principle being this—that having worked a week I work a portion of that time for nothing.—I do not quite follow.

K-467. If I work during this month and I am entitled to Rs. 60 as my pay, and if you fine me Rs. 10, there is a portion of that time during which I have worked for nothing. Is that a principle ?—I would look at it as a re-assessment of your value for that period.

K-468. That is a principle, surely. In an important principle like that I understand the practice and policy of the North-Western Railway is to decline to allow trade union representation ?—That is not a principle.

K-469. If it is not, will you demonstrate any cases where you do allow it ?—It is not in many cases.

K-470. Do you expect, with a large staff like this, the men will be content with a condition of affairs of that character ?—I think the staff will be satisfied with the steps we are taking with regard to the establishment of a Personnel Branch.

K-471. Is that a considered answer ?—Well, certainly for the near future.

K-472. There is a note in your memorandum dealing with contract labour employed on the construction of new lines or large capital works. What kind of control do you exercise over the rates and wages, hours of labour, and the provision of shelter and sanitation, as a railway administration ?—The control actually is that the officers on the work see that the encampments are maintained in a sanitary condition. They can speak to the contractor if there is any complaint about delays in the payment of wages.

K-473. Does it go beyond that ?—I could not say. I have had no personal experience.

K-474. Can you tell me whether there is any statutory protection or regulation of labour employed on those works ?—There is the Workmen's Compensation Act applicable in certain cases.

K-475. Take the large volume of labour : is there any statutory protection or regulation ?—No.

K-476. In the memorandum submitted by Lieut.-Colonel Gill—I do not know whether you had an opportunity of reading this memorandum—he says under ' Railway Construction ' : " When the construction of the Kangra Valley Railway was taken in hand in 1926, these orders (that is, the long existing but forgotten orders that the railway administration is required to inform the Director of Public Health when new lines are to be constructed and of the arrangements made for safeguarding the health of the labour force) were forgotten and little or no provision was made for safeguarding the health of the labour force until the Director of Public Health took up the matter with the railway authorities. Here again, he followed up his advice by carrying out a local investigation and thereafter submitted to the railway authorities, although it was not his duty to do so, a complete sanitary scheme on the lines of that employed at Joginder-nagar ". Can you tell me whether any provision for health and shelter was made ?—I cannot say that for certain. At that time the medical administration of the railway was a matter for the Punjab Government ; the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals was our administrative medical officer, and, as far as I know, we advised them of the possibility of this construction ; they may not have, between the two departments, taken adequate steps or given adequate notice to our advice.

K-477. We may take it that in all future cases, as far as sanitation is concerned, proper provision will be made ?—Yes.

K-478. With regard to the provision of finding shelter for employees during construction work, what has been done by the railway administra-

tion ?—We construct family quarters for our people, and, as far as I have been able to ascertain, the contractors give certain material for their labour to construct quarters.

K-479. Does the railway administration provide any shelter for coolie labour at all ?—For contractor labour, no.

K-480. Is it one of the conditions of the terms of contract that the contractor should provide shelter ?—I have no experience on construction.

K-481. *The Chairman* : There has been a proposal, I think, somewhere in India, that in all new construction works, it should be required, by legislation if need be, that the medical officer of the district should be satisfied about the provision which is to be made for health and sanitation ? Would you have any objection for enacting such a law ?—No.

K-482. *Mr. Cliff* : With regard to your remarks on the recruitment of staff for other branches of the railway, can you give me a rough division between the skilled labour or superior staff and the unskilled labour ? I want the approximate numbers ?—It is very difficult ; I cannot tell you offhand.

K-483. I see from your memorandum that you give certain privileges to your employees. I want to know what special privileges the large mass of illiterate staff on your railway get. If I am not troubling you, I would like to have a rough division between the skilled and the unskilled labour ?—Yes.

K-484. Have you made much progress in the training of unskilled labour ?—In certain directions there has been progress. For instance, you have a man who starts off in a running shed as an unskilled man, as a cleaner ; he becomes a fireman and can become a Driver.

K-485. What I want to know is whether, having regard to your experience in training unskilled labourers, you are hopeful of making much progress ?—In regard to certain lines, yes, but in certain other directions, no ; for instance, you have certain coolies who take up jobs, they will not progress and become skilled in any large numbers ; of course, there are exceptional cases.

— K-486. Dealing with wages you say in your memorandum “ The last general revision in the rates of pay of the staff took place early in 1920 ”. The statement with regard to wages that was supplied to us by you this afternoon sets forth the scales of pay on 1st August 1914 and on 1st April 1920 ; while at the end of the printed memorandum is given the scales of pay on 1st April 1920 and on 1st April 1929. I take it that in both these documents the scales of pay given as on 1st April 1920 include the advance which came into operation from the 1st April 1920. Will you tell me what was the amount of increase that was given on the 1st of April 1920 ?—These increases were given at a time prior to 1st April 1920.

K-487. I see from your memorandum that the increases were given in the month of August 1920 but to take retrospective effect from 1st April 1920. The Railway Board's memorandum gives us figures with regard to the increase in the cost of living. I want to know what was the increase that was given on 1st of April 1920. Can you tell me what was the rate of pay on the 30th of March 1920 ? In your memorandum you say “ War allowance sanctioned from 1st October 1917 at 10 per cent. of salary to those in receipt of less than Rs. 25 per mensem *plus* 5 per cent. to those above Rs. 25 per mensem. This was subsequently doubled for those in



receipt of Rs. 70 per mensem and under from 1st November 1918 ". Does that mean that those who were in receipt of less than Rs. 25 got an increase of 20 per cent. ?—Yes, from 1st November 1918.

K-488. Was there any increase between 1st November 1918 and 1st April 1920 ?—No.

K-489. The Railway Board in their memorandum say " The estimated increases (in the cost of living) in 1920 over the pre-war rates vary in the several provinces from 35 per cent. in the United Provinces to about 78 per cent. in Madras " until we get to the Punjab where it is 100 per cent. According to the Railway Board the increase was 100 per cent. in the year in which you increased your scales of pay. Is that correct ?—That is what the Gazette said ; we have no reason to doubt it.

K-490. Was the grain compensation allowance given before April 1920 ?—Yes, I think it was in 1917.

K-491. What did it consist of ?—We got a figure from the Provincial Government which showed what rates were considered necessary for the dearness of grain in various localities.

K-492. Were you surprised at the strike occurring in 1919 ?—I was not here then.

K-493. In your memorandum dealing with wages you say : " No agreements are made with employees in respect of their pay, but agreements embodying other conditions of service are executed by all superior and certain classes of the inferior staff ". Dealing with a public service of this magnitude and character, do you think it advisable to continue the practice of imposing wage rates without securing an agreement ?—We have a schedule of rates which is fixed for various grades and which is common knowledge to any one seeking employment with us. They know exactly what we are prepared to offer and accept service accordingly. We do not impose any fanciful rates after men are appointed.

K-494. In answer to Sir Alexander Murray you said that the rates for unskilled labour were determined by the rates obtaining in the district. Is it a common rate that you have for coolie labour on the North Western Railway ?—No. It varies in different districts. It is highest in Karachi and lowest in places near Lahore. The difference will be within a rupee or two a month.

K-495. Do you agree with the statement of Sir Ernest Jackson quoted by Sir Alexander Murray that the wages should not be raised, because the labourers are improvident ?—I do not think Sir Ernest Jackson ever said that.

K-496. Do you agree with a statement like that, which may lead to the conclusion that the railway administration should spend the wages of the labourers for the labourers ?—No.

K-497. What do you think is an adequate living wage and what is the third lowest rate which you pay to an unskilled worker ?—All the details of the wages paid for the various classes of workers are given in our memorandum.

K-498. Taking the third lowest rate to be Rs. 20 a month, can you give me an idea of what that sum can buy, in order to see whether it is an adequate living wage or not ?—I could not say.

K-499. With regard to the provision of quarters for your employees, can you tell me how much was spent during the last five years on the construction of quarters for the major staff as distinguished from the amount spent for the minor staff ?—It is rather difficult. I shall try to get it.

K-500. Can you give an approximate proportion of the two amounts ?—I am not able to do that.

K-501. If you want to know what the Railway is doing to provide quarters for the subordinate staff, it is absolutely necessary that there should be a division like this made.—(*Col. Walton*) : We can get information regarding the amount spent on quarters for literate and illiterate employees ; we can also divide the amount spent according to the various types of quarters on which it has been spent.

*Mr. Cliff* : I want a division between those intended for officers who are controlling and those who may be regarded as work-people.

*Mr. Gregory* : There are work-people drawing from Rs. 15 to Rs. 600.

*Mr. Cliff* : I mean what is normally accepted by the term “work-man”.

*The Chairman* : Would you be satisfied with the classification into literate and illiterate workers ?

*Mr. Cliff* : That would be too arbitrary a division. What is the amount spent for the staff from the manual labourer to the foreman ?

*The witness* : Would not a classification according to the types of quarters meet the point ?

*The Chairman* : Classified into those for officers drawing above Rs. 250 and those drawing below Rs. 250.

*Mr. Cliff* : I will accept a classification like that.

K-502. In your memorandum you have given a percentage of fines to wages. Can you give me, taking the number of people fined during the last 12 months, the average fine of the people fined.—It will be a few annas.

K-503. Can you tell me whether the running staff includes the signal staff ?—No. They are excluded from the running staff.

K-504. In your memorandum dealing with hours of work you say : “There are very few continuous workers who at present do more than an average of 60 hours a week in a calendar month, or intermittent workers who do more than 84 hours a week”. What is the definition of an intermittent worker ?—The definition for the purpose of these rules is this ; “Work which is essentially intermittent is that which does not entail continuous effective work throughout the hours of duty, but involves long

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periods of inaction during which the worker is present, but is not called upon to display either physical activity or sustained attention ”.

K-505. Does it mean a week of 84 hours ?—It means 84 hours between calling in and breaking off.

K-506. What is the longest working day and the longest working week for the running staff ?—The question is being investigated in connection with the application of the rules regarding the hours of work.

K-507. Is it in connection with the weekly rest day convention or with the International Convention ?—Both.

K-508. In your memorandum you say “ Improvement in efficient working in the direction quoted above could not have been attained had the staff not improved in efficiency as well ; this has been achieved by the administration during recent years ”. May I take it that from your observation and experience there has been a considerable improvement in the efficiency of the railway staff generally ?—(*Colonel Watson*) : Yes, very considerable improvement.

K-509. Do you anticipate that the improvement which has been very considerable, will continue ?—Yes, certainly.

K-510. What is the date of the issue of the “ Notes for the guidance of officers in dealing with the Union ” mentioned in your memorandum ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : These instructions were issued about the year 1920 or 1921.

K-511. I understand from some questions put to you by Mr. Gregory that you agree that subscriptions for union purposes should be deducted from the salary just as other subscriptions are deducted for a period of 12 months ?—Yes.

K-512. Might I ask whether it has been considered that the period might be extended ?—The deductions were objected to by certain members of the staff, I understand, who thought that it was a sort of order that these subscriptions were to be paid because the railway administration arranged to collect them. That was the objection.

K-513. *The Chairman* : Is it a fact that when you collected the subscription there were 56,000 members ; when you did not, there were only 6,000 ?—Yes, the membership dropped very considerably.

K-514. Is there any other case where the employer collects the union subscriptions ?—No.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## (RAILWAYS)

## Seventh Meeting

LAHORE.

Monday, 28th October, 1929.

## PRESENT :

The Right Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY, (*Chairman*).The Right Hon'ble V S. SRINIVASA  
SASTRI, P.C.

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, BART.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt.,  
C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

Mr. HARKISHAN LAL, Bar-at-Law.

Mr. W. TAYLOR, Director, East  
India Carpet Company, Amrit-  
sar.

Dr. K. C. HITESHI.

Mr. M. A. GHANI, Bar-at-Law.

Col. C. WALTON, D.S.O., Agent,  
North-Western Railway.

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E.

Pt. RAM AUTAR, Vice-President,  
North-Western Railway.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S., (*Medical Assessor*).*Assistant Commissioners.*

Mrs. DAGMAR CURJEL WILSON.

Miss SIRAJ-UD-DIN.

*Lady Assessors.*

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

*Joint Secretaries.*

**Colonel C. S. M. C. WATSON, D.S.O., O.B.E.,** Chief Operating Superintendent, and **Mr. A. K. Muirhead,** Deputy Agent (Personnel) on behalf of the North-Western Railway, recalled and further examined.

K-515. *Drwan Chaman Lall* : In your memorandum dealing with the question of a living wage for skilled and unskilled workmen you say : " There is no hard and fast method of fixing wages, which are generally based on economic considerations, supply and demand,.....". Do the wages that you pay to your skilled and unskilled workmen depend upon the law of supply and demand ? Is that your criterion ?—(*Col. Watson*) : In certain cases they do. When it is found that labour cannot be got the starting pay is raised.

K-516. Would you not consider it more feasible to lay down a minimum living wage and get your workers on that basis, rather than on the basis of supply and demand ?—It is a very excellent thing to do, but it is practically impossible.

K-517. You made a statement that the lowest paid worker on your system is paid Rs. 16. Are you aware that cleaners on your railway and in the loco shed start on Rs. 10 ?—Boys start on Rs. 10.

K-518. What about gangmen ? Do they not start on Rs. 13 and go up to Rs. 17 ?—Yes, the minimum is Rs. 13.

K-519. So that it is not correct to say that the minimum is Rs. 16 in all cases ?—That is minimum in the shops.

K-520. You stated that the minimum wage paid to your workers was Rs. 16. But there are certain categories who are paid less than Rs. 16.—Boys are paid less.

K-521. And gangmen ?—In certain places the starting pay is regulated by the general range of wages in the district.

K-521a. Regarding housing you say in your memorandum : " These quarters are, however, allotted to the staff on the basis of their rank and pay irrespective of race ". Have you the North Western Railway Union's memorandum, appendix A ?—No, we have not got it.

K-521b. I will pass it on to you. It is stated therein that " The superior type of quarters which are vacated by the employees were reserved for Anglo-Indians and Christians.....". Would you in view of this statement still say that there is no racial discrimination in regard to allotment of quarters ?—I am not prepared to accept the statement as it is made.

K-521c. Would you investigate that ?—I shall certainly do so.

K-522. With regard to institute benefits, is there any contribution made by the railway administration to Indian institutes ?—Yes.

K-523. Which ones ?—I have not a list of them.

K-524. There are 27 children in the Indian institutes as compared with 52 in the European institutes. Are there any Indian institutes to which you make any contribution ?—Yes, certainly.

K-525. Would you, looking at the tables and the figures given, say that there is no question of racial discrimination? Out of the funds provided by the Fines Fund you have, during 1925-30, helped 27 Indian children and 57 European children. Can you give the amount spent on the Indian institutes and the amount spent on the European institutes?—These are all contributions towards children.

K-525a. That is what I want.—(Mr. Muirhead) : Are you raising this question about the education grant for children?

K-526. I want to know the amounts paid towards Indian children and European children. Apparently there is much more paid for European children *per capita* than for Indian children?—(Col. Watson).: Yes; I should think so.

K-527. Is that not a question of racial discrimination?—It is the result of what was done a long time ago.

K-528. It is continued from 1925-30; and the matter has been very prominent before the Legislature. We have been told that practically there is no racial discrimination on the railways.—There is no racial discrimination in anything which originates now. These are results of discrimination made in the past.

K-529. You intend to put an end to that thing?—Certainly.

(Mr. Muirhead) : May I supplement that? The factors to be taken into consideration are that Indian children's education is provided for by the local Governments. The education of Anglo-Indian and European children is not to the same extent provided by local Governments. In the case of European and Anglo-Indian children, they usually go to hill station schools as boarders, whereas Indian children are educated usually as day scholars. The result is that there is a vast difference between the fees payable on account of Indian children attending as day scholars, and Anglo-Indian and European children attending as boarders. So that, you may have a payment made for one European child of Rs. 30, which might pay for ten Indian children at Rs. 3 a head, simply because local institutions are provided for Indian children.

K-530. Does that reply mean that you do not intend to do away with racial discrimination?—We do not admit that that is racial discrimination. We merely treat each case on its merits. If we have to put a child into a school, we must naturally pay for the education of that child while in that school. It is no racial discrimination, I would submit.

K-531. Do I take it that there are ample facilities in a city like Lahore for the education of the children of Europeans as well as Indians?—I would not be prepared to say that the facilities are suitable. The question is one of climate also.

K-532. Would you agree that an Indian employee of yours would be equally willing to send his child to a school in a hill station provided for by you?—There is nothing to prevent him doing so now.

K-533. How many children of Indian employees do you send to hill stations?—I understand that aided schools in the hills have to take a percentage of Indian children. If an Indian employee wants to send his child to a hill school, we are prepared to aid that child in the same way as we aid a European or an Anglo-Indian child.

K-534. Yet the result is that you spend a lakh of rupees on those schools in which European children are educated and only about two thousand rupees on those schools where Indian children are educated ?—The Indian children are provided for by the Provincial Government. Similar facilities do not exist for European or Anglo-Indian children. They are not provided with free education.

K-535. Do I take it that it is your principle to provide educational facilities for the children of your employees, irrespective of race ?—We have done so, and the matter is one for further consideration.

K-536. What is the number of European children who are sent by you to the hill schools ?—We do not withhold assistance from Indian employees who take advantage of the schools provided in the hills. If an Indian employee was prepared to send his child to the hills we would consider the case in just the same way as the others.

K-537. Would you provide the same facilities for an Indian child ?—Yes, the rules do not debar that.

K-538. Why do you not do so in actual practice ?—Because they do not take advantage of it.

K-539. Have you had applications from Indian employees asking that their children should be provided for by you in the hill stations ?—Yes, there have been instances where Indian employees' children have been educated in the hill schools.

K-539a. How many of them have you assisted ?—I could not say straight away.

K-540. In the case of cautions and fines, are there any investigations made apart from the fact that you leave the matter entirely in the hands of the selected officer ?—(*Col. Watson*) : Certain selected subordinates are given authority to caution and fine their staff. If there was an appeal, further investigation would be made.

K-541. Is the evidence made available to the accused ?—He is given a charge sheet which he has to answer.

K-542. Is the evidence made available to him ?—Not in the ordinary sense.

K-543. Do you not think that it is very unsatisfactory ? Do you not think he ought to have the right to test the evidence which is laid against him ?—I do not think you could apply that method to conditions of railway working.

K-544. Suppose a man falls ill and is absent from work, and is unable to produce a certificate, how is he protected ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : He sends word to us that he is ill and arrangements can be made for the Sub-Assistant Surgeon to visit him at his home. In connection with the Labour Bureau, we have further provided that one of the assistants to the Warden shall go round to see whether the man is being attended.

K-545. Does not your statement in regard to indebtedness connote a great deal of economic distress amongst the employees ?—Not necessarily ; it may be a question of extravagance.

K-546. Have you ever investigated the matter ?—We have investigated some cases. We found that sums of money beyond the means of the employee have been spent on ceremonies, which is extravagance.

K-546a. Can you give us the report of your enquiries ?—We did not make more than a verbal enquiry. When they apply for loans to the Co-operative Credit Society, the men state what their liabilities are and what their present position is due to. It is a confidential report.

K-546b. That cannot be made available ?—I am afraid not.

K-547. Are you aware of any cases where the running staff are unwilling to work trains under rest ?—(Col. Watson) : It sometimes happens that they complain that they are not getting enough rest, but very often they complain because they are getting too much.

K-548. I hope you will take into consideration the points which have been raised by the employees in order to avoid trouble. I think their point of view should be considered and what they have to say in regard to this matter ?—We have already asked for their recommendations but have not received them.

K-549. Why do you have different leave rules for different classes of your employees ?—The matter of leave rules is under consideration by the Railway Board. We are awaiting the issue of the rules.

K-550. Have you any leave reserve as such ?—(Mr. Muirhead) : We do provide leave reserve in some cases, for some categories.

K-551. Would it not be better to have a comprehensive scheme for all categories ?—It is more or less comprehensive.

K-552. Is there any dissatisfaction with the scheme which you have ?—The dissatisfaction is in those cases where we have not got a leave reserve, but usually it is in those cases where, if an inferior servant is given leave, his duties can be divided between the other men who are available. If an office peon goes away on leave, his duties are split up amongst the other two or three ; but sometimes that cannot be managed, and in individual cases a difficulty does arise.

K-552a. So that really speaking there is no leave reserve as such ?—In other categories we have a leave reserve.

K-553. I see that the percentage of your men going on leave is three. Is not that a very low percentage ?—We have provided leave reserves in those cases where a man has to be relieved at a station where similar men of the same category are not available. Take the case of a booking clerk. On each division we have a certain number of booking clerks on the leave reserve, so that if a man falls ill at an out-station we have another man available to send to that station.

K-554. Have you ever considered the question of consulting the Union in regard to this leave reserve matter and taking the opinion of the employees ?—(Col. Watson) : We know the opinion of the employees perfectly well.

K-555. Would it not be possible to hold consultations with the representatives of workers in order to come to an understanding in connection with all these matters ?—We invite them to put up their suggestions. With regard to the introduction of the Geneva and Washington Conventions, we have asked them to put up representations, but so far they have not done so.

K-556. You talk about efficiency having increased. Has there been, *pari passu*, any increase in the wages of these people or not ? Have you given any advance in wages owing to the increase in efficiency ?—Yes, the



increase in efficiency has taken place over the same period of time as the wages have been going up.

K-557. Do you consider that the average workshop hand has increased in efficiency ?—I was talking of the outside staff.

K-558. That would be excluded ?—Yes.

K-559. Is it correct to say that the average man is barred at Rs. 2-8-0 ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : He is not, strictly speaking, barred. Provided he is fit, his advancement to another grade is dependent on vacancies in the higher grade. For instance, a man on Rs. 2-8-0 can be promoted to become a *mistri* if he is fit and if a vacancy exists. That is the usual custom in all services.

K-559a. I would like you to consider the statement mentioned in the Karachi document ?—I am not prepared to accept anything in that document.

K-559b. I would like you to go through it ?—I have not the time just now.

K-560. If you have anything to say in regard to complaint of the block in promotions, I wish you would send in a statement to the Commission ?—We are now investigating the question of the block in promotions, and where it is necessary to do so we will try and ease the situation.

K-560a. In your memorandum you mention the number of men discharged. Am I correct in saying that if a member of the superior staff is charged with bad work, inefficiency or any other offence, he has now the right to place his case before the Public Service Commission ?—(*Col. Watson*) : Not that I know of ; I have never heard of it.

K-560b. Will you look into the matter ? The cases are referred now by the Railway Board to the Public Service Commission ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : We have no right of appeal to the Public Service Commission.

K-560c. But cases are now being referred ?—I am not in a position to answer that ; that of course the Railway Board can answer.

K-561. Would it not be better to have a board like the Public Service Commission for the subordinate staff ? Would it not avoid a great deal of discontent amongst members of that particular class if some machinery of that kind were evolved ?—If some suitable machinery were set up, we should have no objection.

K-561a. Why was not the Indian Institute at Karachi recognised ?—I am not quite sure about the reasons, but I think we were wanting them to take up a sports club rather than an Indian Institute.

K-561b. The complaint has been made that the real trouble with the North Western Railway Administration is that it is a very close bureaucracy. Would it be better to make it a little more democratic ; would not you avoid a great deal of trouble by doing that ?

*The Chairman* : That is a very general question.

*Diwan Chaman Lall* : What I was suggesting was that they might humanise the machinery a little more by setting up consultative boards right through the railway system to consider all these matters which have been brought to our notice ; for instance, leave, promotion, appeals, dis-

charges ?—Are you now inferring that you accept all these statements as correct that have been brought to your notice ?

K-561c. You must not ask me, as a Commissioner, for my opinion ; I want you to express your opinion ?—I am not prepared to give an opinion that point.

K-562. *Col. Walton* : Is it a fact or not that the railway has helped in the formation of certain schools for Indian employees where those employees are employed outside their own Province ?—(*Col. Watson*) : Yes ; they have got a Sindhi school in Lahore, a Punjabi school in Sukkur, and a Punjabi school I think in Karachi.

K-563. In regard to contract work, if it is considered necessary to have legislation or regulations to safeguard the conditions under which labour works under contractors, do you consider that it should be a function of the railway or a function of local Government ?—It must be that of the local Government ; the local Government employs probably more contractors than we do.

K-564. There was retrenchment in the workshop labour on the North Western Railway between 1924 and 1929, and I think it was suggested that the retrenchment followed the strike of 1925. Was that the case, or was it due to any business principles ?—The retrenchment was made on account of the Report of the Raven Committee.

K-565. Can you explain further what the Raven Committee recommended ?—They recommended the concentration of repairs in big workshops and showed that it was uneconomical to spread them over small shops. The result was the closing of some of the smaller shops and the concentration of the repair work in Lahore and Sukkur.

K-566. Mr. Muirhead, I gather from a recent answer of yours that you do not consider that discontent is prevalent on the railway, and that it should not be judged from the statements contained in the memoranda of the union ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : I have not read the memoranda of the union, but I know discontent is not so prevalent as people try to make out that it is.

K-567. Do you consider that a state of discontent is one that should be welcomed either by the railway or by the employees or by the public ?—No.

K-568. Then do you consider it is a responsibility of the railway to do all they can to remove discontent and employ all means to that end ?—Certainly.

K-569. Is that the reason that Labour Bureaux were formed ?—Yes.

K-570. Or was it in order to counter the trade union movement ?—We did not consider trade unions at all when we established the Labour Bureaux ; it was merely to get into contact with the staff.

K-571. In regard to helping trade unionism to move forward on the railway, do you consider that the administration has given facilities for it ; and, if so, what facilities have been given ?—In the beginning, we have provided machinery. For a year we allowed subscriptions to be collected through the pay sheets. We have always granted special casual leave, not only to central delegates to meet quarterly, but to divisional delegates to meet monthly. We have given them free passes from station to station

where they required to meet. We have given them a loan on one occasion. We have placed railway employees on loan to them to work as office bearers. I cannot think of anything more just now.

K-572. Have interviews been granted to deputations when asked ?—Yes, provided they let us know ahead what business was required to be discussed.

K-573. Can you state any occasion on which an interview was refused either to a deputation or to the President ?—We had a case that I dealt with, in which the President asked for an interview, but refused to state the business that he wished to discuss, and in that case the interview asked for was refused.

K-574. It has been suggested in evidence that the union on the railway would get on better if further facilities were granted to it ; can you suggest any further facilities, beyond those that have been granted ?—I cannot.

K-575. Do you think it would be of any help if any members of the staff went to England for training in trade union principles ?—(*Col. Watson*) : I think it would be helpful to a certain extent, but the trouble is this : when they come back, is any one going to follow them ? You may produce a good leader, but you may not get the staff to follow. One of the real difficulties in establishing a sound union is that it is so difficult to get both good leadership and faithful following.

K-576. *The Chairman* : Those who did not get the joy ride might capture the union ?—Quite likely.

K-577. *Col. Walton* : Can you explain the system of appeals on the North Western Railway in cases of punishment or discharge and dismissal ? How far does an appeal lie in cases of punishment, discharge and dismissal ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : In the case of punishment a man is punished for breach of the rules, an ordinary straightforward case, in which he can appeal to the next higher authority to that inflicting the punishment. In the same way with regard to discharge, the man has the right of appeal to the next higher authority who reviews his case. In the case of discharge, very careful consideration is given, and if the matter is upheld by the next higher authority, that is the last court of appeal, but the Agent always reserves to himself the right to review any case in which he thinks a review is necessary. In the case of a dismissal a man has the right of appeal to the highest authority in the land ; that is His Excellency the Viceroy, who can call for a final review of his case.

K-578. It might be inferred from the memorandum of the North Western Railway Union that there is some delay in replying to appeals. If that is a fact, can you state any practical difficulties which lead to such delays ?—(*Col. Watson*) : If a case has to be given very careful consideration and documents and further proof called for, it naturally takes a long time.

K-578a. Is it not the case that an appeal from one class of staff has to be considered in relation to the whole railway ?—I am sorry I did not quite follow your question. Matters of that kind require very careful consideration, because questions of rates of pay and so on affect not only our own railway but very often other railways.

K-579. In regard to housing, has the railway any policy with regard to priority of quarters wanted and regular provision in the programme ; and, if so, is there any restraining influence that prevents the building of quarters to the extent required ?—Every Division makes out a list of quarters they desire. These lists are co-ordinated, so that at headquarters there is a priority list of housing requirements throughout the whole line. The practical difficulty is to get allotments of money sufficient to make a real impression on that list.

K-580. In whose hands is the allocation of funds ?—In the hands of the Railway Board, or rather, of the Government of India.

K-581. *The Chairman* : That is to say, you would like to build more houses if the Railway Board gave you the money ?—If the Finance Department gave us the money, we should certainly build more houses. We have actually housing requirements shown in our programme which have from time to time to be held over because funds are not available.

K-582. *Mr. Cliff* : So they are needed ?—They are needed, certainly.

K-583. *Col. Walton* : Has there been a scheme prepared for housing workshop employees in Moghalpura ?—A scheme was got out and was in our programme for two or three years ; but owing to lack of funds, and also I think owing to the fact that the Railway Board are considering the whole question, it has been withdrawn from our programme for the time being. We understand the Railway Board are considering the whole question of housing, especially of low paid employees in connection with the general raising of their status. The policy was laid down in Sir George Rainy's last Budget speech.

K-584. Can you state what the approximate cost was estimated to be for the colony at Moghalpura ?—55 lakhs.

K-585. *The Chairman* : Have you the plans ready and the land ?—We have the plans ; the land was notified but owing to our being unable to go on with the scheme we had to relinquish it, because it is not fair to the owners to keep it notified unless you have some immediate prospects of making use of it.

K-586. *Colonel Walton* : Is there any system with regard to promotions, what principles are applied and in whose hands is the selection left ?—There are two principles with regard to different classes of promotion. In a case where a man is promoted from grade to grade in the same class, that is to say, his class of work not being altered, the usual principle is to eliminate those who are unfit for promotion and then promote the remainder in order of seniority ; that is to say, more weight is given to seniority than to selection. On the other hand, if a man is being promoted or selected for an appointment in another class entailing a change of work and also not entailing injustice to those above him, then selection is much freer because in that case he is not taking the place of those men senior to him as in an ordinary grade to grade promotion. These are the principles on which we go. The actual selection of men is done with considerable care ; the men's records are all kept on cards by the Personnel Branch, and it is the Personnel Officer's duty to bring up the names of men for promotion when vacancies occur. These are considered by the executive officers under whom the men work. There is always one executive officer as well as the Personnel Officer, and very often two. If it is a question of promotion which is controlled from the head office, the recommendations

K-596. There is no difference between the standard of living of an Anglo-Indian and of a European ?—No.

K-596a They live alike. The Indian workman is also called upon to take an initial wage of Rs. 33, which with deductions brings it down to Rs. 20 p. m. In addition to this poor standard of wage, one of the terms of employment as entered in the agreement bond of the Anglo-Indian employee is that he must be a member of the Auxiliary Force ?

*The Chairman* : That is a central question, surely.

*Col. Gidney* : That is a question in which the Railways are interested !—That is a matter concerning the Railway Board.

K-596b. This particular railway, the N. W. R., enforces this condition as one of the terms of the agreement. Is that not so ?—Yes, that is so.

K-597. Can you tell us how it is possible for an Anglo-Indian lad, who has to face the extreme climatic conditions of the Punjab, to live on Rs. 20 a month ?—Not, if he is living alone.

*Diwan Chaman Lall* : Would that not also apply to an Indian ?

K-597a. *Col. Gidney* : I am including an Indian as well. Is it the desire of the North Western Railway to equalise the present standard of wages ?—Yes. Do you mean that there should be no racial discrimination ?

K-597b. Yes.—That is so.

K-598. Do you not engage British soldiers as Guards on an initial pay of Rs. 125 ?—It is open to British soldiers, but it is very seldom that any one is taken on.

K-599. If the standard of living is the same in the case of the Anglo-Indian and the Britisher, why should there be this enormous difference between Rs. 20 and Rs. 125 in their starting pay ?—The British soldier is a married man, but the Anglo-Indian or the Indian may not be so, when he enters service.

K-599a. No, that is not so ; the British soldier is generally not a married man. In the matter of equalisation of wages, I quite agree that equal duties and equal responsibilities must carry equal wages. But would you not consider it better from a humanitarian standpoint, to raise the level of the Indian wage to that of the Anglo-Indian wage, rather than lower the Anglo-Indian wage to that of the Indian, levelling up instead of levelling down ?

*The Chairman* : I think that is a matter of policy.

*Col. Gidney* : That is so, but is there any other railway where this system prevails ?—(*Col. Watson*) : I do not know the system in other railways.

K-599b. Has this policy and method of exercising it been laid down by the Railway Board ?—No, except the general policy of abolishing racial distinctions.

K-600. Would it not be better in every way, and would it not be the one and only antidote to these innumerable strikes and other symptoms of unrest amongst Indian and other workers, to raise the wages of the employees to a living wage instead of bringing them down to the starvation

level of Rs. 20 a month, which would not buy even one decent suit in this country :—Before all the wages were raised to the Anglo-Indian level, the railway would stop working.

K-600a. Is the North Western Railway aware that in thus reducing the wages of the Anglo-Indian employees they are acting contrary to the spirit of the Instrument of Instructions issued to the Governors which runs as follows. “ . . . to see that no order of your Government and no Act of your Legislative Council shall be so framed that any of the diverse interests arising from race, religion, education, social conditions, wealth or any other circumstances might receive unfair advantage or unfairly be deprived of the privileges or advantages which they have hitherto enjoyed.” ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : We have not reduced the wages ; we have retained the wages. The instructions of the Government of India are also that there should be no racial distinction. So that, the wages not having been altered at all, the Anglo-Indian has to come in at a point where usually he did not come in before, owing to racial distinction.

K-600b. Does it not amount to reducing the wages, if you start a man at a point at which he did not come in before ?—No.

K-601. Can you tell us whether in the Loco and Traffic Departments men are expected to work, or do actually work for 10, 15 or 20 hours at a stretch ?—(*Col. Watson*) : That is only accidentally.

K-602. Supposing during such accidental period the employee falls asleep or gets ill and fatigued and an accident happens, who will be held responsible, the Railway controlling and demanding this over-work or the employee who obeys ?—Each case will be decided on its merits.

K-602a. Have you any statistics to show the loss of time and money due to the illness of Railway employees ?—We have not that ready.

K-603. Would it not be correct if I said that three-fourths of the North Western Railway subordinate staff were in the hands of money-lenders ?—I hope it is not so. I think you would be exaggerating.

K-603a. Besides loans from the co-operative credit society can you tell me how much money has been advanced to these men who are in debt ?—That is given in the memorandum.

K-604. To encourage thrift and providence, would it not be advisable to insure the lives of your employees and pay their premiums from their accumulated provident funds ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : That would require very careful investigation ; we are not prepared to give an opinion off-hand.

*Col. Gidney* : Such a practice exists in the Imperial Customs Department, Calcutta, and in some other Government departments. I would like the North Western Railway to sympathetically consider my suggestion.

K-605. Do you think that the personal relationship between the staff and the officers is the same as in former times ?—(*Col. Watson*) : I think it is better now.

K-605a. Is it altered since the divisional system was introduced ?—It has been improved.

K-606. Has it not markedly altered since the divisional system was introduced ?—Yes, it has improved.

K-607. You remember that Mr. Pearce who presided over the Railway Agents' Conference last year, made a speech which was entirely devoted to the absence of human touch between employer and employee in the railways ?—I think he spoke of the difficulty of establishing human touch between employer and employees, a difficulty which we are trying our best to solve.

K-608. Are your subordinates frequently denied interviews with their divisional heads ?—I do not know of any reasonable request which has been refused.

K-609. Is there an appeal to the divisional head against the orders of one's immediate superior officer ?—If the man is penalized there is an appeal to the divisional head.

K-610. Can he appeal only to the divisional head ?—No, not in such cases as dismissal.

K-611. Do I take it that a discharged subordinate can appeal only to his divisional head ? Can he not appeal to the Agent ?—No.

K-612. Am I right when I say that a practice is growing in all railways,—I do not exclude the North Western Railway—by which officers take unfair advantage of and misuse paragraph 2 of the service agreement so as to evade an enquiry if the man has been dismissed, and which enquiry is denied when he is merely discharged ?—I cannot answer for other railways ; in the North Western Railway that practice is decreasing and we are discouraging the resort to that.

K-612a. Can you say how many discharges took place last year in the North Western Railway ?—It is given in the memorandum.

K-613. Is it a common or a rare event for the divisional head to disagree with his junior officer ?—Sometimes it occurs.

K-614. With regard to the question of European education, are you aware that the Anglo-Indian and the domiciled European community pay 60 per cent. of the total cost and Government pays only 30 per cent., of European education whereas in the case of Indian Education, the Indian pays 30 per cent. and Government pays 60 to 70 per cent. ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : That is not quite correct. The payment of fees is on a sliding scale according to the number of children that are sent.

K-614a. Would you agree to the introduction of Fundamental Rules for all employees in your railway ?—(*Col. Watson*) : The matter is not in our hands ; it is for the Railway Board to decide.

K-615. What percentage, if any, do you set apart for leave reserve in the various subordinate departments ?—It varies in different departments.

K-615a. Is it a fact that your Local Traffic Service is used as the leave reserve of the covenanted officials ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : I submit it is not within the purview of the enquiry. The matter concerns only promotion of subordinates.

K-615b. You stated just now that a dismissed employee had a final right of appeal to His Excellency the Viceroy. I submit that the Viceroy always refers such appeals to the Railway Board for opinion. But the Railway Board has already been approached by the appellant and refused redress. Would it change its already expressed opinion if referred to by His Excellency? In other words, of what use is such an appeal to His Excellency?—Once it goes to the Railway Board, that is as far as I can answer for. What they do above that, I do not know.

K-616. Are you aware that in dealing with cases of dismissal, the East Indian Railway have a procedure by which the accused employee is allowed to secure the services and advocacy of an official to help him in his defence?—We do not know that.

K-616a. When you recruit guards do you advertise in the papers or do you simply promote subordinates?—We call for applications through the public press.

K-616b. Do ex-guards from other railways appear for selection?—I have never analysed the applications in that way.

K-616c. Will you take it from me that that is so?—Probably that is so.

K-616d. You make your selection from among those people also?—We very seldom make a selection from outside the list of guards.

K-616e. Is it right to make a selection like that when there are guards on the waiting list waiting for promotion?—If there are people in service fit to be promoted we give them preference.

K-616f. Would you object if a time-scale of promotion were introduced in the Railway?—From the very bottom.

K-617. Would you object to the introduction of a time-scale of promotion from the upper subordinates down to the Ticket Collector, charge-men and other such graded people?—We have time-scale up to a certain point; but the whole question is where the point is to be fixed after which it becomes a question of selection to a higher grade.

K-618. Almost all other departments have a time-scale of promotion. Do you really object to its introduction on your railway?—(Mr. Muirhead): We have so many branches in the Railway Department. We have a Ticket Collector who can go up a certain line; a Guard who goes up a certain line; a Station Master who goes up a certain line; a Fireman who goes up a certain line. The Fireman cannot become a Guard; the Guard cannot become something else.

Col. Gidney: I am aware of that.

The Chairman: The Commission must confine itself to certain broad questions; and our time will be simply wasted if we go into these minute details. Have you now concluded?

Colonel Gidney: My point is that 87 per cent. of the lower subordinate staff are blocked for further promotion, and my object was to ask for a time-scale of promotion as an antidotal measure.

K-618a. Mr. Ram Autar: Colonel Watson, you have just stated that selections are made and very careful consideration is given. May I ask you whether this selection has ever been recorded?—Yes, it has certainly been recorded.

K-618b. In your own office—if I may quote one or two instances—in the Rates Branch there was a vacancy on Rs. 160, and men on Rs. 140 whose



promotion had been blocked for years have been overlooked and a ticket collector who was getting Rs. 33 has been brought in on Rs. 160. What was the consideration that was made in that case?—I was not concerned with that selection, so I cannot answer that question.

K-618c. To take another instance : An Office Superintendent was required for Delhi, and 20 to 25 persons were called for from different places. Among them was an M.A., LL.B., with 12 years' service. Yet a guard was selected for that post, who was getting only Rs. 75. On what merits was he selected?—The post of Office Superintendent is purely a selection post. The man was selected for his special merits.

K-618d. That is exactly the question : what consideration was given to merits?—I cannot say; I was not there. All I can say is that if he is a bad superintendent the officer who selects him is the first to suffer.

K-619. You have just stated that the question of blockages in promotion is under consideration. This question was brought to the notice of the Agent in one of the deputations about four years ago and the Agent was much pleased to say that he would make inquiries, but up to this time nothing has been decided. May I know how long more it will take?—Considerable improvement has been made in the promotions of Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters.

K-620. I know you have removed only one block, that is in the case of Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters ; but there are a lot of commercial clerks on stations, such as, booking clerks, goods clerks, train clerks, despatchers and so many others, who are blocked on Rs. 60?—That is perfectly correct, and it will be done where it is necessary. It is only a matter of funds. As soon as funds can be found the necessary relief will be given.

K-621. It has already taken four or five years. Should the staff expect this relief within the next few months?—All I can say is that it will be done as soon as possible.

K-622. You have just replied about appeals. Has an accused person a right of appeal to any higher authority. I take it that the Divisional Officer is the highest authority in the Division. I suppose the Divisional Officer fines and punishes a man, and that man is only entitled to appeal to the Divisional Superintendent?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : Yes.

K-623. And you know that a Divisional Superintendent has no separate establishment. He is simply the head of these executive officers?—Yes.

K-624. They sit in the same building and probably in the same room, and appeals are forwarded to him by the same officer who inflicts the fines and punishment?—No, the appeal is forwarded to him by the Personnel Officer.

K-625. I will come to that point also. After the Divisional Superintendent rejects the appeal do these people have no further right of appeal to the Agent?—No.

K-626. Is there any objection to your giving a right of appeal to the Agent?—In that case the next thing would be an appeal to the Railway Board and the Viceroy, and the Viceroy would be simply receiving appeals all the time.

K-627. My question is, what objection is there to giving a right of appeal to the Agent ?—Simply this that there must be a finality somewhere, and the punishment given must be of a nature which it is within the competence of the next higher authority to dispose of in the same way. It does not matter whether he is in the same office. He uses his own personal judgment.

K-628. Does the Personnel Officer or the Executive Officer decide questions regarding welfare, etc., of the staff ?—What do you mean by “decide” ?

K-629. Suppose a man has a grievance or has done something wrong. Who will decide his case, the Personnel Officer or the executive officer ?—The executive officer deals with cases of discipline, and the ultimate decision is given by the Superintendent of the Workshops, who is equivalent in status to the Divisional Superintendent.

K-630. I am not asking about workshops. My question relates to the Personnel Branch working in Divisions. Who decides the matters, the Personnel Officer or the executive officer ?—If it is a question of leave, it is the Personnel Officer ; if it is a question of punishment, it is the executive officer.

K-631. That remains with the executive officer. Has the Personnel Officer any power to revise the orders of the executive officer ?—No.

K-632. How do you expect the Personnel Officer to look after the welfare of the staff ?—Because he can put up the cases of the men to the Divisional Superintendent, who is senior to the executive officer.

K-633. Does the Personnel Officer put up the appeal to the Divisional Superintendent ?—If it is a question of an appeal against the decision of the executive officer, the Personnel Officer can take it to the Divisional Superintendent and record his views on it.

K-633a. Who has the upper hand, the Executive Officer or the Divisional Superintendent ?—There is no question of upper hand. The Divisional Superintendent is the ultimate authority.

K-633b. The Personnel Officer has the power to look after the welfare of the staff ?—He has a great deal of persuasive power.

K-634. You say this Personnel Branch has expedited matters regarding grievances and other things. Since the formation of Personnel Branches matters regarding promotions, etc., are dealt with by it. You have Commercial Superintendents of Commercial Branches in your Office, and since 1924 you have recognized that there are certain anomalies in that grade. Your Chief Commercial Manager at that time and even now has made recommendations about the rectification of these things to the Personnel Branch, and this matter is known to you also. But it is still under consideration ?—Investigation has shown certain difficulties do exist, and before the thing can be set right we want a clear explanation as to how certain things have been done in the past. When that is cleared up I will be able to decide the questions at issue. It affects the staff adversely in one phase, and I hesitate to take action.

K-635. The Personnel Officer has not been able to improve the conditions, and now you are trying to set up a Labour Bureau. They will also take up the same attitude. When a Personnel Officer, who is a gazetted officer, has more power and also can approach the authorities more easily,

cannot rectify things, how do you expect the Labour Bureau to rectify them?—We have shown actual results since the formation of the Labour Bureau. The question is solely that the Assistant Commissioner does not think that something has been achieved, while we claim that a lot has been achieved. It is merely a question of opinion.

K-636. Do you know that the staff are not agreeable to accepting this Labour Bureau?—No, we do not know.

K-637. And if 90 per cent. of the staff give it in writing that they do not want this Labour Bureau and wish to put forward their grievances through the Unions, then you would abolish it?—The question of unions does not arise in regard to the establishment of the Labour Bureau. It is merely a machinery set up by the Railway Organization to establish contact with the staff.

K-638. If the staff themselves say they do not want this Labour Bureau?—There are a lot of things the staff say they do not want, but we are not satisfied that that is always in the best interests of the staff.

K-639. That means that whether they want it or not, it will remain?—If it is considered necessary.

K-640. You say that appeals which, on the face of them, call for an investigation by the headquarters office, are dealt with there, and after full scrutiny and examination of the points involved the appellant is duly informed of the decision. Do you make any independent enquiry about these appeals?—Yes.

K-641. By what means?—By every means at our disposal. We write questions, make enquiries, and we look into the man's service sheet.

K-642. Does any officer from headquarters go and make enquiries on the spot?—No, not as a rule.

K-643. If no enquiry is made by you or your senior assistant, how can you come to a right conclusion?—We do not make enquiries on the spot, but we make enquiries.

K-644. You make enquiries from the Divisional Superintendent, or from the same person against whom the appeal lies?—We could not ask for it from anybody else.

K-645. Do you not think the system is defective?—No.

K-646. Would you be prepared to consider the suggestion that enquiry should be made from head office direct by an official?—I have said that the enquiry is made from head office.

K-647. Does it not mean that the accuser is the judge?—No. You are dealing with appeals?

K-648. The appeals are generally against the decision of the Divisional Superintendent?—No. They are against the decision of the executive officer.

K-649. And also the Divisional Superintendent. You make further enquiries from the Divisional Superintendent?—We draw our conclusions from the information which is placed before us—the man's appeal,

the points he brings out in his appeal, the information which may be available as the result of an enquiry held in the Division, and the man's service as a whole. All this material can be examined.

K-650. You say that 1,600 appeals were dealt with at headquarters. In how many did you reverse the decision of the Divisional Superintendent ?—I could not tell you.

K-651. *Mr. Cliff* : Does one appeal in three succeed ?—Appeals do succeed. We have reversed orders.

K-652. A substantial percentage ?—The percentage is very small in which the orders are reversed.

K-653. When you say " reversed " you mean modified ?—No, modified or set aside.

K-654. *Mr. Ram Autar* : You say that as a rule employees are only fined for serious offences. Can you tell me the nature of the offences for which the staff are generally fined ?—(*Colonel Watson*) : Those involving the safety of the public. You will find fuller particulars in regard to this in the memorandum of the railway administration.

K-655. You strictly impose a fine of Rs. 2 for loss of pass receipts, even if the passes are duly collected and submitted for audit, also if the receipt is not submitted within 7 days. Do you consider that that is a very serious offence ?—It is, and it is necessary to inflict a heavy fine in a case like that in order to avoid fraudulent abuse of passes.

K-656. There is no question of fraud. The pass is duly collected, only the man submits the receipt one day late ?—The question of possible fraud does arise.

K-657. A man in Rawalpindi has been fined Rs. 10 for shaving in his office. Is that a very serious offence ?—It might have been a serious offence against discipline.

K-658. Do you admit that there are more liberal grants of passes made to the superior staff than to the low-paid staff ?—Yes.

K-659. If passes are meant to be given to the staff as an assistance, do you think you are justified in granting more privileges in the case of the well-paid staff who can afford to pay for their own tickets ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : What do you mean by " well-paid staff " ?

K-660. A man getting Rs. 200 or over ?—A man who is getting Rs. 200 is more or less a different type of man from a man who gets Rs. 16, and it is in the nature of things that a man who is getting Rs. 200 would have more need for passes than a man who is getting Rs. 16. This is a question of privilege.

K-661. You say you have provided a training school for employees in order to induce them to improve themselves with a view to promotion and advancement in the service. Is that a fact ?—(*Col. Watson*) : Yes.

K-662. Suppose a ticket collector wanted to qualify himself for the post of a Station Master or a goods clerk ; do you allow him to get training ?—Not at present, because there is no room in the school.

K-684. In what circumstances is a man's bonus forfeited ?—Where he is involved in a criminal case which causes a loss to the administration.

K-685. As regards pay, I have some difficulty in reconciling the scales you gave us with the information supplied to us by the Railway Board. I take it that there has been no tremendous increase in the staff since 1913-14 ?—There has been.

K-686. The Railway Board inform us that your pay bill has trebled since just before the war ?

*Colonel Walton* : The Railway Board's memorandum has not been supplied to these witnesses.

K-687. *Mr. Clow* : Surely you can say to what percentage your pay bill has altered since before the war ?—The typed figures supplied to you do not take in the allowances which are paid.

K-688. That is the point.—That is the actual increase in pay.

K-689. Not in remuneration ?—No.

K-690. What are the other items included in the remuneration ?—Mileage, over-time and daily allowances—various items which form a man's remuneration.

K-691. Are you prepared to say that the remuneration has risen a good deal more than the table would indicate ?—Yes.

K-692. We have had a memorandum submitted to us which contains the following statement “.....labour is now recruited through an employment officer who is in charge of the Railway Labour Bureau. But in practice after all, it is the *mistri* or the chargeman who, after getting his usual tip, gets a labourer employed”. Is there any foundation for that statement ?—It is a deliberate mis-statement of fact.

K-693. We have been told frequently that it is impossible to administer an industrial establishment unless the *mistri* has the choice of the men under him ?—That has not been found in actual practice in America. The American system has been more or less adopted out here. The foreman concerned helps in the selection of the men, but the actual thing is done by three men.

K-694. Has the chargeman no say in the choice of the men under him ?—No. The system is that the employment bureau is represented, by an officer and the works manager, whom he nominates, and by a foreman whom he nominates.

K-695. So you have three men dealing with the selection of employees. Do you find that that militates in any way against efficiency ?—We cannot say from actual experience that that is the case, but from our own selections in other branches of the service we find it helps to bring about greater efficiency.

K-696. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : With regard to this question of the rise in wages which took place in 1921, it appears that the rise in wages started at 10 per cent., and then in some cases was raised by 20 per

cent. over the 1914 figures. One of the Commissioners drew attention to this and pointed out that the Labour Gazette figure in Bombay for 1920 was 83 per cent. above 1914. It looks as if there was a big discrepancy. But I see in the Railway Board's statement about your railway it is said that wages rose between 1914 and 1921 by 81 per cent. May I take it that the difference between the 81 per cent and the 20 per cent. mentioned before is made up by these various allowances and extras ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : It must be so. I do not know where the Railway Board have got their information from.

K-696a. Apparently from a chart which was supplied by the North Western Railway.—It is quite probable that that does include the allowances.

(*Col. Walton*) : Is Sir Victor Sassoon referring to the North Western Railway memorandum ?

(*Sir Victor Sassoon*) : Yes.

(*Col. Walton*) : That is the war allowance which was sanctioned from October 1917 and then from November 1918. That is not the permanent increase.

K-696b. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : What was the actual permanent increase ?

(*Col. Walton*) : Unfortunately that did not compare with pre-war, so we submitted a few days ago to the Commission a statement showing the increases. We gave some percentages in that statement of the increases over pre-war.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : It gives it under various grades. I was trying to get a weighted percentage rise.

*Col. Walton* : I only wanted to draw attention to the fact that the North Western Railway memorandum refers to a temporary increase which was granted towards the end of the war.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : But even if we take this memorandum which was submitted afterwards, it makes the rise 60 per cent. in the case of the ten and twenty rupee men and 28 per cent. for the 260's and 330's. Even if you weighted these it would be a great deal less than 81 per cent. over the whole lot, which is stated in the Railway Board's figures. They quote it as coming from a chart supplied by the North Western Railway.

*Col. Walton* : I dare say that is correct ; but that paragraph to which you referred only refers to temporary increases.

*The Chairman* : Those temporary allowances were consolidated afterwards in the figures you submitted to us ?

(*Col. Walton*) : Yes.

K-697. From your memorandum I notice that the period elapsing before payment of wages varies from four days up to a maximum of 44 days, according to the different classes of men who are paid. Could those delays be contracted ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : We believe they could be speeded up.

K-698. Could you speed up those 39 to 44 days for the workshop staff?—I cannot say. We have not investigated it. It has been investigated by the financial side.

K-699. Could you contract them sufficiently to bring it down to 10 or 14 days?—The bonuses are delayed much longer than the payment of wages.

K-700. The piece-work is the trouble?—Yes.

K-701. I take it you would not be able to pay every body within seven days?—I do not think so.

K-702. It comes to this. You could pay some people more quickly, but certain classes of work cannot be so quickly paid. Therefore I would not be wrong in saying that it is not possible to make a rule which would cover all types of cases?—I do not think it would be possible.

K-703. *The Chairman* : Where men are paid on piece-work a period of 39 to 44 days elapses. Is it not possible to pay a substantial part of their wages?—Their wages are paid separately from the bonuses. Bonus forms the subject matter of a different payment. Their days' wages are paid between the 9th and 11th of the month following that for which it is due. The bonus earned by the men on piece-work is paid subsequently.

K-704. What proportion, roughly speaking, does the bonus bear to the wages?—We calculate that on the piece-work system the man should be able to earn up to 33 per cent. more than his day's wage ; so, taking it roughly it would be 20 or 25 per cent.

K-705. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : On the question of the recognition of the unions are you aware that the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway have actually recognized two unions?—No, I do not know.

K-705a. And apparently although these unions are hostile to each other they do not suggest altering that procedure?—I do not know.

K-706. *Mrs. Wilson* : As a large employer of labour do you consider in your health policy the primary importance of preventive medicine? You want to keep the worker well and not only cure him when he is ill. You recognize that it is more important?—Yes.

K-707. Up to the present has your medical staff not been weak on the preventive side? Your medical relief is administered largely by civil medical practitioners who have no public health qualifications and who have had no special training?—Our administrative medical officer and his deputy are in possession of the degree of D. P. H.

K-708. But the large number of your medical men who are concerned with the health of the workers have not that degree?—No. We have just appointed four medical officers against our cadre, but it is in a transitory state. We are going to take over the provincial organization as it exists and put in our own. Out of four appointed, three of them are in possession of the degree of D. P. H.

K-709. A great amount of the care of the people is in the hands of those who have no public health qualifications ?—Yes.

K-710. Under these conditions the inspection of the workers' quarters must be carried out by people who have no public health qualifications ?—We have Sanitary Inspectors who are trained by the local college. They have been trained as sanitary men.

K-711. You intend to provide health visitors in future ?—Yes. We have made provision for 12 health visitors who will naturally be required to possess the necessary qualifications.

K-712. Have you considered the provision of any steps whereby the workers' wives could get out in the fresh air ? They come to us suffering from lack of sunlight. Have you considered the provision of a *parda* garden ?—That is a very good idea and will be considered. In building or locating quarters our medical officer is always consulted.

K-713. I am referring to the quarters which already exist ?—We are modifying them to bring them up-to-date.

K-714. Women come to the hospital and state that their husbands dare not be treated for venereal disease because of the penalties attached. Have you any information about that ?—The medical officer is in a rather peculiar position. As a member of the administration he is required to bring to our notice any case where a man is suffering from a disease brought on by his own folly ; but against that he is bound under medical etiquette not to divulge these things, as between a patient and his medical adviser ; and medical etiquette usually prevails.

K-714a. Are you aware that the percentage of venereal disease taken for the general population is about 20 ?—I have no information.

K-714b. And that the large extent of venereal disease is not found in the country districts but in the towns ?—I have no information.

K-714c. From a preventive point of view, would it not be worth abolishing the penal clause ?—A penal clause, as far as we are concerned, is practically a dead letter.

K-715. *Colonel Russell* : You will agree that a living wage must among other things provide for a physiologically sufficient dietary ?—(*Colonel Watson*) : Yes.

K-716. How do you calculate the minimum wage that is at present paid to the lowest class of workmen. Do you calculate it according to the cost of the articles of diet and the cost of living ?—The original wages were calculated so many years ago that no one knows.

K-717. I have an instance here given to me of a typical diet of a worker in the railway workshops. The wages of the individual concerned are Rs. 26 per mensem. I need not go into the details of the various articles that he consumes in his morning and evening meal ; but the total for his morning meal is Re. 0-5-11 and for his evening meal



Re. 0-4-2. Working that out for the whole month the figure comes to Rs. 18-12-0. The total wage is Rs. 26. Would you accept these figures ?—I have no basis to go on.

K-718. In any case if these figures are more or less correct, it leaves very little for the wife and family ?—Quite so.

K-719. How many medical officers do you employ on the North Western Railway—gazetted and non-gazetted ?—(Mr. Muirhead) : We have 22 gazetted officers ; 17 Medical Department Assistant Surgeons, who are seconded : 3 wholetime Railway Assistant Surgeons ; one civil Assistant Surgeon, who is seconded, and we have 85 civil staff Sub-Assistant Surgeons, seconded ; one Sub-Assistant Surgeon loaned from the East Indian Railway, and 12 wholetime N. W. R. Sub-Assistant Surgeons. In addition to that we propose to employ 12 health visitors.

K-720. That is 141 medical officers ; and yet in the statements sent in by both the Unions there is a complaint that there is not sufficient medical staff, and that they do not get sufficient medical attendance. Do you agree with that ?—No.

K-721. Do these employees, as a matter of fact, take full advantage of the medical facilities provided by the railway ?—Where it suits them.

K-722. Could you explain the administrative difficulties in accepting medical certificates from general practitioners. This is a point that was brought up by both the Unions ?—We feel that a medical practitioner who is not in some way connected with the railway, in the kindness of his heart, forgets the interests of the railway by granting much more leave than is necessary to railway employees.

K-723. Do you insist in every case that a certificate from a private practitioner should be signed by a Railway Medical Officer ?—We like to exercise a check.

K-724. Is there any other method which you can suggest by which this difficulty of accepting private medical certificates can be avoided ?—One would be to raise the standard of honesty of the medical fraternity.

K-725. That is dealt with under the Medical Act. Do you ever report to the Medical Council of the Punjab cases of deliberately false certificates ?—I do not think so.

K-726. Can you tell us why the central dispensary at Lahore has been closed ?—I do not know. Probably the explanation is that we have an arrangement in some cases where we subsidize a civil dispensary and where the Assistant Surgeon is under the control of the Civil Surgeon, who is also our medical officer. I do not think there is any difficulty about such certificates.

K-727. Has your medical department any statistics available regarding the cause of absenteeism and sickness among the workers ?—I do not think they have yet.

K-728. Has any attempt been made to collect these statistics : they would be extremely useful ?—I think they are dealing with that point.

K-728a. Would it be possible to introduce a sickness insurance scheme in such a service as the Railway ?—I have not considered the matter.

K-729. *The Chairman* : There are two questions which arise out of what you have already told us. The first refers to the cost of living. We paid a most interesting visit on Saturday to your new Training School and we were greatly pleased with the arrangements there, both for the training and the housing of the students. We were told that the cost of the dietary of those students, who appear to have liberal meals, came to Rs. 12-8-0 per month. Is that correct ?—That is right ; and the messes out of that also pay for the necessary servants and cooks. I think there are about 4 servants attached to each mess.

K-730. An organized service for 375 students can be done more economically than it is done in the case of the individual worker ?—They are divided into messes. Each mess runs its own catering arrangements ; but they buy in bulk.

K-731. Have the three messes different rates ?—Apart from the refresher course, the messing rate is the same.

K-732. Is the figure of Rs. 12-8-0 the average ?—That is what the average works out to. It covers one or two odd things, besides the actual food, for instance, some of the servants.

K-733. The other question relates to the Labour Bureau. I take it that the purpose you are trying to achieve by the establishment of the Labour Bureau is to have a means of hearing the grievances wherever they may be—that no grievance may go unheard ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : That is so.

K-734. And by means of this elected committee you hope that all grievances will come to the knowledge of the Bureau, and be dealt with through the Bureau by the management ?—That is so.

K-735. You do not consider this Labour Bureau to be anti-trade union, or rather supplementary to the trade union ?—Actually, yes.

K-736. So that it may deal with the many minor questions which really could hardly be dealt with by any other machinery ?—That is so.

K-737. I understand that the persons freely elected in the shops to this committee were in many cases trade unionists ?—Yes.

K-738. That is to say, you have not put on any bar of any kind against the free election of trade unionists to this committee ?—No.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

(RAILWAYS)  
Twelfth Meeting

DELHI

Wednesday, 6th November 1929.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon'ble V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI, P.C.	Mr. G. D. BIRLA, M.L.A.
Sir VICTOR SASOON, Bart.	Mr. JOHN CLIFF.
Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, Kt., K.C.S.I., C.I.E.	Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.
Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.	Diwan CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.
Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.
Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.	Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S. ( <i>Medical Assessor</i> ).
Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E.	} <i>Assistant Commissioners.</i>
Lt.-Col. H. A. J. GIDNEY, M.L.A.	
Rai Sahib CHANDRIKA PRASAD.	
Mrs. J. C. CHATTERJEE, <i>Lady Assessor</i> .	
Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.	} <i>Joint Secretaries.</i>
Mr. A. DIBDIN.	

**Mr. T. G. RUSSELL**, Chief Commissioner, Railways ; **Mr. A. A. L. PARSONS**, C.I.E., I.C.S., Financial Commissioner ; **Mr. A. M. HAYMAN**, O.B.E., Member ; and **Mr. H. A. M. HANNAY**, Member, on behalf of the Railway Board.

K-739. *The Chairman* : Mr. Russell, in the introduction to the memorandum of the Railway Board, you say : " Recently the Government of India have, with the sanction of the Secretary of State, strengthened the organization of the Railway Board by the addition of a Member who deals principally with problems affecting all staff generally and labour in particular." That raises the point of the division of duties, if there is a division, between the Members of the Railway Board. Could you, quite shortly, tell us what is the present organisation of the Railway Board ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : The present organization consists of the Chief Commissioner, the Financial Commissioner, the Member for Engineering, the Member for Traffic and the Member for Staff. The Financial Commissioner deals with practically everything ; everything goes to him which has a financial aspect. The Member for Engineering deals with all technical matters, both on the civil and mechanical engineering sides ; he also deals with the technical staff with regard to appointments and matters

of that kind ; he does not deal with general staff routine matters but with appointments only. The Traffic Member deals with all traffic problems, rating, transportation, and so on. He also deals with the traffic staff and the non-technical staff in exactly the same way as the Engineering Member does for technical staff. The Member for Staff, that is the new Member, deals with all general staff problems, all labour problems, matters such as the Washington and Geneva Conventions, and everything of that description.

K-740. You, as the Chief Commissioner, are the philosopher and guide to the whole ?—Yes.

K-741. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What does the Financial Commissioner deal with ?—He deals entirely with the finance side ; every financial matter goes up to him for review.

K-742. *The Chairman* :—When was the new Member, the Staff Member, appointed ?—In April of this year.

K-743. Perhaps it is rather early to ask you as to the results of that appointment ?—Having regard to the amount of work he has done, I do not think we could possibly have done without him. He has done a very great deal of work and I think he has been a great help to the Board.

K-744. What exactly are his duties ?—He deals with all labour problems ; he is dealing now with education, and with other matters to do with staff generally. He does not deal with individual staff, but he deals with everything to do with the staff generally. He deals with all the staff problems, the labour problems, and everything that crops up in that direction.

K-745. What are his relations to the arrangements on individual railways ?—He is just a Member of the Board.

K-746. I mean that each railway has a considerable amount of independence, but you of the Railway Board deal with general problems which cover the whole of the State Railways ?—That is correct.

K-747. Again you say : “ The Board hope this year to initiate certain measures for the amelioration of service conditions of the lower paid employees.” Can you tell us whether that hope has yet materialised ?—The first thing is new leave rules ; these have been settled ; we have passed these and we hope to bring them into force within the next two or three months.

K-748. At the end of this year ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : The particular leave proposals which Mr. Russell has mentioned require the agreement of another Department of the Government of India, and I think the sanction of the Secretary of State. We have made up our own minds on them and have drafted the rules ; but until we have received the approval of those other authorities we cannot bring the rules into force. Naturally we cannot say at what particular period the Secretary of State will give sanction to those proposals or whether he may not raise questions on them, so that it may take longer than the end of the year to bring them in force.

K-749. But you have definitely put up the proposals from the Railway Board ?—So far as we are concerned the proposals have gone forward.

K-749a. Then is the nature of the proposals at present confidential ?—Would you allow me to answer that later. As far as we are concerned there is nothing really confidential in them at all, but there are certain rules with regard to proposals which have to go to the Secretary of State. We are a Department of the Government of India besides being a Railway Board ; and it is a question whether officers of the Government of India can publish proposals which have to go to the Secretary of State before they have received his sanction. I will have that point looked up, and perhaps I may be allowed to answer your question later.

K-750. I can quite see the difficulty in your telling us in advance what your proposals are before they have received sanction because they may undergo modification ; but may we take it, in general, that they are proposals for an improvement in the conditions on which leave is granted ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : A very distinct improvement.

K-751. In your memorandum you deal with your attitude towards trade unions. Referring to the rules issued in 1921 you say : “ These rules provided that to obtain recognition an association must ordinarily consist of a distinct class of Government employees and every Government employee of the same class must be eligible for membership.” I do not quite understand the words “ consist of a distinct class ”. Does that mean a single class ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : No, not a single class ; it means a group.

K-752. Then it would be more correct to say “ distinct classes ”. You do not take objection to the combining in one union of different classes ?—We have no objection whatever.

K-753. You require to know what classes that union represents ?—Yes.

K-754. Then it would be more correct there to say “ must consist of distinct classes ” ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : What we have written here follows the exact words of the orders of the Government of India which were issued at that time ; but in actual practice on the railways we have travelled beyond these actual words and have moved more and more towards what *Mr. Russell* said just now : that is we recognize them if they embody not only one particular class but groups of classes.

K-755. Then you tell us : “ Generally the attitude of the Railway Board is that unions conducted on sound trade union principles ought to be encouraged.” May I take it from that that you do not regard the proposals which are springing up on the different railways for the hearing of grievances and dealing with matters within the particular railway, as a substitute for trade unionism ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : You mean the staff councils and bodies of that description ?

K-756. Yes ?—We certainly do not consider them as a substitute. (*Mr. Hayman*) : We regard them as parallel organizations, all working for the benefit of the staff.

K-757. You regard them as parallel organizations, consistent with the growth of trade unions, the latter representing the views of the workers on the broader matters of policy ?—That is so.

K-758. The smaller day to day grievances and matters within the works being dealt with by these works councils?—That would be true generally, but we would not prevent staff councils or works committees from bringing forward any question, however, big that question may be.

K-759. But not to the exclusion of a trade union taking up these larger points?—No, certainly not.

K-759a. *Mr. Clow* : In your memorandum you give estimated increases of the cost of living in several provinces. How were these figures calculated?—I sent a memorandum this morning which explains the basis upon which that information is arrived at.

K-759b. That is in modification of the original memorandum?—It explains the basis ; in the paragraph we say it is from data available in the Board's office ; the Secretary to the Commission asked me if I would explain in rather more detail what that basis was, and I have done that in this memorandum which has been circulated this morning. (*Mr. Russell*) : I think we have got a reason for every figure we put forward.

K-760. Yes, but it is interesting to know the reasons by way of checking the cost of living. With regard to the periods of wage payment and the delay in the payment of wages, we made some enquiries in Lahore ; the general tenor of the replies was that they had no objection to paying wages earlier, but that the difficulties in the way arose on the financial side ; that there was not a sufficient staff to calculate wages in time. Would that be a fair statement?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I do not think the difficulties are on the financial side. Are you talking of workshop labour chiefly ?

K-761. Yes, it is better to divide the workshops from the running staff. With regard to workshop labour it is quite definitely the opinion of the Railway Board that all railways should arrange to pay their labour very shortly after the period by the work of which these wages are earned. Actually Mr. Hayman and I have taken steps as we go round the railways to see whether we cannot improve the time in which wages are paid. I should not like to say to the Commission that with the class of labour, which is largely illiterate, that we have got, we can always pay the workshop labour within four days from the end of the period by the work of which the wages are earned ; I would not like to guarantee that we could do that ; but it seems to me probable that we ought to be able to make arrangements by which they are paid their wages within four or five days of the end of the month.

K-762. *Mr. Cliff* : You are now speaking of workshop labour?—I am speaking now only of workshop labour, and I must make one qualification with regard to that : where they are on piece-rates or where a portion of their wages is from piece-rates, I do not think it would be possible to pay that portion of their earnings so quickly. But where they are, as they very often are, on a fixed wage, *plus* a bonus for extra work, I do not see that there should be in most cases—and I hope in all cases—any difficulty in making arrangements so that they should be paid the fixed wages within four or five days of the end of the period by the work of which the wages are earned. The Railway Board have, in fact, in the past made efforts in this direction, but in this country, as you know, Mr. Clow, one's efforts do not always bring immediately the fruit which one hopes to derive from them. I do not think there should be any difficulty in our bringing that into force fairly shortly. I am of course referring

particularly to the State-managed railways, but I think the Company-managed railways would be prepared to follow suit.

K-763. *The Chairman* : That is four or five days as compared to 15 days ?—It varies very much now as far as I know. I want to be quite frank with the Commission. Mr. Hayman and I went down to one place and I think we found they were paid within 20 days. We made rather a fuss about it and we were told of all the difficulties. We said that something had got to be done. When we reached Calcutta on the same tour, on the 5th of August I received a telegram saying that every man had been paid that month on the fourth day of the month. That is really the reason why I can say that I do not think it impossible to reduce the period to something less than a week ; I hope less than a week.

K-764. *Mr. Clow* : I was thinking more particularly of the more poorly paid staff ; that is the coolies, who are paid a fixed daily rate, so that at the end of the month it would only be necessary to multiply the daily rate by the number of days on which they appeared ?—I admit I cannot myself see any difficulty, and though it might mean putting in one or two more clerks it would be well worth it.

K-765. Would it not be better to divide the staff into sections and pay the different sections on different days of the month ?—That is why I was careful to say not payment four days after the end of the month but four days after the end of the period by the work of which the wages are earned. Whether it will be necessary in workshops to distribute the work of payment, and say that certain shops shall be paid from the 4th to the 3rd and certain shops from the 15th to the 14th and so on, I am not sure. I think it possible that we might have the same period throughout most of the workshops. But I should not like to express a definite opinion.

K-766. You refer in your memorandum to bonuses to employees. We were told by one of the unions at Lahore that their objection to this system was due to the fear which had been, as you know, realised in a number of shops in England, that as soon as they began to earn an adequate bonus it would be reduced. That system has been in force on the Burma Railways for ten or twelve years. Has the bonus ever been reduced in Burma ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Very occasionally ; but as it is a bonus on a piece-work basis you fix a rate with reference to the system you adopt. Supposing you adopt an outturn system you try to fix your rate as carefully as you possibly can. If you find you have fixed a rate wrongly, either operating unfairly to the man or paying a man a quite disproportionate wage for his outturn, you must consider the question of altering that rate ; but the enquiries that I have made satisfy me that the occasions on which we have revised individual rates in the last four or five years have been very small.

K-767. You surely agree that the fact that a man appears to be earning a very substantial amount, is not a sufficient reason for reducing the rate ?—It might be.

K-768. You are getting the benefit of more work ?—But I might be paying an inordinate amount for the outturn of a particular article. It may mean that through inexperience an officer has fixed the rate too high, so that I may be paying something like five or six times more than ought to be paid.

K-769. But surely that would indicate carelessness ?—If we have to fix thousands of rates and one or two are wrong, you cannot say that the officer is a careless officer. There are many methods of fixing wages in a workshop ; you might fix a wage on the outturn in manufacturing a particular article or manufacturing it within a particular time ; we must reserve to ourselves the right to alter the rate when we find the rate is not a suitable rate either from the men's point of view or from our own point of view. —(*Mr. Russell*) : Now all the big workshops have accurate costing departments which go carefully into the question of fixing rates, but I think we must reserve the right to alter the rate.

K-770. I recognize that. As regards accidents in workshops, you give the figures of the total accidents for two years and you give for seven years a very gratifying reduction secured in a particular workshop. Am I right in saying that if you had given figures for seven years for all workshops it would have shown a phenomenal increase ?—We can get the figures for you and find out.

K-771. Does the Labour Member not know that ? Is it a fact that the number of recorded accidents—I will not say actual accidents—in recent years in railway workshops has increased phenomenally ?—I do not think it is a fact that serious accidents have increased, but I think nowadays we take account of little things, like a cut thumb, of which we did not take account in the old days.

K-772. The numbers at least of recorded accidents have probably doubled during the last seven years ?—Yes, that is quite possible.

K-773. A year or two ago I think you made some enquiries as to the causes of that ?—And I think that is what we found : that minor accidents were recorded which had not been recorded in the old days.

K-774. You do not think that the actual incidence of accidents has increased ?—I do not think the number of serious accidents has increased at all ; I think the sole reason for that figure is that minor accidents are now recorded.

K-775. Have you attempted to apply generally the methods which have been followed in the Jamalpur workshops and which have given such satisfactory results ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We circulate to other railways any information we get from one railway which shows results of this nature. I think we have sent that information on to other railways and asked them to improve their methods on those lines.

K-775a. Would it be advisable to send information as to methods that have been used in the Jamalpur workshops and enforce similar methods elsewhere ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : Under what powers ?

K-776. Under the administrative power in respect of State-managed railways. I will not press that. As to the question of fines we have never been able to obtain any information as to the percentage that fines bear to individual wages. For instance, would a 5 per cent. limitation per month in any way affect your present system ?—I think that was considered a year or 18 months ago. I have just been on leave and my memory is not therefore exact. But I believe the Railway Board's opinion was that it was not desirable to impose such a limitation ; that it would rather tend to make the 5 per cent. a normal fine and that in certain cases it is desirable to impose a heavier fine rather than to resort to still more serious punishment.



K-777. *Mr. Joshi* : Mr. Russell, you stated just now that your attitude towards trade unions is generally one of encouragement. Is this a fresh attitude, or has this been the attitude of the Railway Board ever since the unions came into existence ?—I think it has been the attitude all along.

K-778. Whenever trade unions were started you recognized them ?—Yes.

K-779. Was there no trouble about recognition of trade unions ?—Originally there was ; because the Railway Board and the railway administrations felt in the old days that trade unions were not run on proper lines.

K-780. So that you admit that there has been a change in your attitude towards trade unions ?—Because there has been a change in the trade unions themselves. The Railway Board were always perfectly prepared to recognize trade unions which worked on proper lines.

K-781. Are all the railway trade unions recognized now ?—No, I could not say they are all recognized. All the unions that have placed themselves on a proper footing have been recognized.

K-782. What is your test of proper footing ?—Any trade union which applies for recognition has to satisfy certain conditions. First of all we must see whether it does actually represent the staff which it is supposed to represent. Certain trade unions which were alleged to represent certain types of staff might actually have only 5 per cent. of the staff as members thereof. I do not think you can say that that trade union would represent these types of staff.

K-783. Have you any objection to recognizing that union as representing the members of that union only, even if they may have 5,000 members and they represent the interests of those 5,000 members ?—In such cases I have to say definitely, " Yes, we would object to recognizing them."

K-784. I know of one union on the Bengal and North Western Railway which has been in existence for many years. Could you say why it has not been recognized by the Agent ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : The union referred to has only a " very small percentage of employees " as members. That is one of the reasons given by the Agent for not recognizing it.

K-785. That union might even then represent its members at least, if not the whole staff.—But then they should not commit the rest of the staff. If you recognize a union which has only a very small percentage of members and they represent a case to a railway administration, they may not be representing the case of the majority of the members of that class.

K-786. But do you realise that when a union comes into existence it cannot include the whole staff even in the very beginning ? It develops slowly and it will be some time before it covers the whole staff. If you recognize it, and as you say you want to do, encourage it, it will grow ; otherwise it will take a very long time to develop—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We have some practical difficulties. Take for instance the North Western Railway. There is a union of certain clerks who are employed on some class of work. A hundred of them have formed themselves into a union and want recognition. To-morrow another fifty clerks might form themselves into another union and ask for recognition. In this way the hundreds

and thousands of clerks on the Railway might form themselves into a thousand unions, and how can the Agent deal with them all? Do you mean to suggest that whenever a union is started, even though it starts with eight people,—one more than the minimum required by the Act,—the Railway Administration should encourage it to develop?

K-787. I put it to you, it might be that in the beginning several small unions might be started. But if you recognized them, they would find by experience that on the whole they did not gain much by approaching the Agent or the Railway Board separately, and that it would be to their advantage if they amalgamated themselves into a single union and spoke with one voice to the authorities concerned. But if you did not encourage them by giving them recognition, it is very likely that they would remain small unions. They would all be discontented with their position. Perhaps some other circumstances which we may not like, might compel them to amalgamate.—(*Mr. Russell*) : I will tell you my personal experience of unions, I know several of them. With regard to the Poona Staff Union, the Wadi Bunder Staff Union, and certain others on the G. I. P. Railway, Mr. Joshi came to me and said : will you recognize each of these unions? I said : yes, I am quite prepared to recognise each of these unions for each of these places ; but when they deal with me I want them to deal with me as a federation. I said that I would deal only with a federation of these unions and not with the unions separately.

K-788. That is quite a reasonable attitude that you take now. While you would be willing to recognize each one of these unions, you want them to deal with you as a federation?—Yes, each of these unions represents only particular limited classes of staff. The Wadi Bunder Union represents only the Wadi Bunder Staff ; it did not set out to represent anything else beyond that staff. The same is true of the Poona Staff union and others.

K-789. Therefore, does not your reply require modification in view of your experience in Bombay?—No, I do not quite admit that it does.—(*Mr. Hayman*) : The Great Indian Peninsula Railway's Staff Union is composed of several unions whose list is given in our memorandum. So that the Agent deals only with the G. I. P. main union.

K-790. I know the history of that union and I am somewhat connected with it. It started with a small union ; then another union was started. The promoters of the unions thought that it would be better to have a federation, though there were several unions. Then they had a federation. That process is followed in Bombay. Is there any objection to your recognizing one small union when it comes into existence and wait for future developments, if a second union is started you can ask both the unions to meet you together?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We have on many occasions recognized small unions. For instance there is the Kanchrapara Railway Workmen's Union on the Eastern Bengal Railway. Though that has only 376 members we have recognized that union.

K-791. But what is your definite policy as regards recognition of unions? You are the Railway Board and you must lay down a definite policy for all the railways. Is it your definite policy that a union should be recognized although it is small? If it does not represent the whole staff, at least you may treat it as representing its members only?—The

Railway Board have laid down no precise policy. Each administration is left free to act more or less on its own lines.

K-792. But I want you to point out a way out of the difficulty. Here is the Gorakhpur Union on the Bengal and North-Western Railway. It has been in existence for eight or nine years without recognition. If the Railway Board had some policy as it ought to, that union would have been recognized long ago.—(*Mr. Russell*) : What we claim is that that union does not represent anybody in particular. It only represents a very small percentage of the staff.

K-793. What is your objection to allowing these unions to represent individual grievances ? I learn that they are not allowed to do so.—As Agent of the G. I. P. Railway I had a good deal of experience with these unions. If I had begun to deal with individual cases put forward by the unions, I could have done 'nothing else. You would have to engage two or three Agents to attend to them. The files of individual grievances in my office were 300 pages long in a fortnight. All those cases, or at any rate most of them, had not been gone into by the unions themselves. What a man said was accepted, put down on paper and sent to me for consideration. If on the other hand the unions had gone into them themselves and assured themselves that they were genuine, I would have been predisposed to consider them. But as the unions at present put up such cases I would not be prepared to go into them.

K-794. Here again I want you to see my difficulty. If you make a rule that the unions cannot represent individual grievances, you will get files of individual grievances piled up in your office.—No.

K-795. You said that the unions would not make any distinction between a genuine grievance and a false grievance and put forward all grievances before you.—That was not quite what I said. I pointed out that in the matter of recognizing unions, the Agent of the G. I. P. Railway and practically every other Agent said : "I shall reserve to myself the discretion whether I shall go into individual grievances or not. I cannot bind myself to go into all individual grievances. If a genuine individual grievance comes up, an obviously genuine one, it will be gone into".

K-796. *Mr. Cliff* : In those cases did the union then represent the person aggrieved ?—You mean, did they come to me in person ? No.

K-797. In no case ?—Not to me personally.

K-798. *Mr. Joshi* : My difficulty is this : When these unions do not get the responsible work of selecting individual grievances they may tend to become irresponsible. If they are allowed to represent individual grievances, the first duty they generally do is to enquire into the grievances themselves before they make representations. That is at least the case in my own union in Bombay, the Textile Labour Union. The practice is : as soon as a grievance is put forward, the Secretary makes an enquiry himself, and if he finds that that is a genuine grievance, he makes a representation. I am sure the same thing will happen with your railway unions if you give them the right and throw the responsibility on them. If they bring up numerous grievances you might tell them : "You have brought up so many grievances within one month.

How is it possible to deal with them. Please go into them yourself and send me only the genuine ones''. By so doing do you not think you will be making the unions more responsible?—I think if any railway administration felt that before a grievance was put up to them, it had been gone into by responsible officials of the union, it might be possible to take account of such grievances.

K-799. Who should make a beginning, the Railway Board or the unions?—I think the unions must make a beginning.

K-800. I think the Railway Board ought to make a beginning, containing as it does more educated and responsible men.

K-801. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : How is the union to make a beginning?—By putting up honest cases.

K-802. You will consider them then?—We do consider cases.

K-803. If they come from the unions?—Yes. We do now. (*Mr. Hayman*) : We have stated so distinctly in our memorandum.

K-803a. *Mr. Cliff* : Do I understand Mr. Russell to say that while he was exercising his discretion if he considered a case, he was still free to refuse the right of the union to make representation in a case which he thought worthy of examination.—(*Mr. Russell*) : Not quite.

K-804. Is there any definite policy of not recognizing unions some of whose officials are outsiders?—We have not definitely objected to them so far.

K-805. *Mr. Joshi* : I find in the memorandum of the Bengal and North-Western Railway that they make a grievance that they do not recognize unions which have outsiders on their executive?—(*Mr. Russell*) : You know yourself that in practically every railway union the leading officials are outsiders.

K-806. I know that there are outsiders and that objection is made to them. I myself was objected to?—I do not think you continue to be objected to.

*Mr. Joshi* : I remember the day when the Chief Commissioner of the Railways and the Agent of the G. I. P. refused to meet me as president of the G. I. P. Railway Conference.

K-807. Will the Railway Board follow the same policy always?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Appendix L to our memorandum shows that almost every body who is an officer of a union in Bombay is an outsider.

K-808. Yet, there is one union on the B. N. W. Railway which has not been recognized.—(*Mr. Hayman*) : The Agent of the B. N. W. Railway would be able to give very good reasons for not recognizing it.

K-808a. But I take it that so far as you are concerned you do not object to outsiders being officials of a union. In this connection are you aware of the instructions issued by the Agent of the N. W. Railway to his officers suggesting to them to give a hearing to secretaries of unions who were employees of the Railway, and that they might use their discretion if the secretaries were outsiders?—We know nothing about this.

K-809. With regard to staff councils, why should you not give representation to the unions on the staff councils? Do you not think

that the attitude of trade unions towards staff councils will change if you give unions the right to elect representatives on the staff councils to the extent to which the unions represent your staff?—Staff councils are not after all purely official organizations. In certain railways you will find that members of the staff councils are also members of the unions.

K-810. I do not say that you object to trade union members sitting on the staff councils. My suggestion is this: suppose you want 20 members for the whole staff and there is a trade union representing 25 per cent. of the staff. If you tell the trade union to elect 25 per cent. of the members you want for the staff council from among the staff, do you not think that the trade unions will change their attitude towards the staff councils? It is not communal representation. It is securing the co-operation of the trade unions in your staff councils. As a matter of fact in Great Britain all the representatives on the side of labour are elected by the trade unions.—(*Mr. Russell*): The employees elect a certain number of members to these staff councils and they have a perfect freedom to elect officials of the trade union so long as they are not outsiders. We cannot have outsiders on the staff councils.

K-811. I am not talking of outsiders at all. You may make a rule that the staff councils should consist of employees alone.—I do not see why the trade unions cannot get representation on the staff councils. If the staff wishes the trade union members of the staff to sit on the staff council, all they have to do is to elect them. We must leave it to the staff to choose their own representatives.

K-812. But the trade union members also are members of the staff?—(*Mr. Hayman*): Members of the staff who are members of the trade union may be elected.

K-812a. What may happen is that trade union membership may be derived from a certain department and they may not be so strong in one department as to compel the election of their choice. But if they get a fair representation according to their membership they will be satisfied. In that case you will be getting a changed attitude from the unions towards your staff councils.—You said just now that one department might not have sufficient members in the trade union to get representation on the staff councils. That would obviously mean that the members of that department did not wish representation. Otherwise they would have joined the trade union.

*Mr. Joshi*: But the members would not join the trade union all at once. I shall leave that point for the present.

*Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad*: The representatives of the Railway Board have been saying to-day that their policy has been to encourage trade unions and not to throw any obstacles in their way. But if you read the Presidential Address delivered at the Indian Railway Associations Conference you would find that they always made unsympathetic criticisms of these unions. In my long experience on the railways I have found that the railwaymen bitterly complain of the obstacles thrown in the way of the formation of unions. For instance, the Agent of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway wrote to the most loyal union of Indian Rail-

way employees at Parel, saying that he would not recognize that union until the majority of the railway employees joined that union. This shows that the Railway authorities do not encourage the formation of unions ; on the contrary they throw obstacles in their way.

*The Chairman* : You want to ask how they reconcile their statement with what you have stated ?

*Mr. Prasad* : Exactly, that is what I ask my friends whether there has been a change of policy which has been hitherto followed by the Railway Board and the Railway administrations. If really there has been a change of policy, I would not press this matter. My point is that all along they have been obstructing the development of trade unions of the Railway employees who are entirely at their mercy.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : Which unions are you discussing ?

*Mr. Prasad* : I am speaking of railwaymen's unions all over India.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : You referred to the B. B. & C. I. union which has not been recognized ?

*Mr. Prasad* : Yes. That has been recognised now. But that has been in existence for many years since 1920 and was recognised only last year.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : Anyhow to-day it is recognised.

K-813. *Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : I want to know whether there has really been a change of policy in recent times with regard to recognition of trade unions ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I think it has been the same always with regard to unions run on proper lines. In olden times the unions were not, most of them, run on proper lines. They did not represent the staff fully. At any rate I know that that was the case in the G. I. P. Railway with regard to the unions there which were not recognized. But all that is past history now.

K-814. *The Chairman* : There has been a change in fact and you attribute it to the improvement in the trade unions themselves ?—You are putting our position correctly.

K-815. *Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : Then, I am satisfied on that point. The second point and a vital one is this. There is a general complaint that the railway authorities have been distrusting Indians and keeping them down in the lowest ranks in almost all the branches of railway service from the earliest days.—I do not think it is fair to say that we distrust Indians. It is not at all a question of distrust. In the old days, no doubt there was discrimination in favour of the European and the Anglo-Indian, for the simple reason that at that time, the European and the Anglo-Indian came forward for railway service and were more fitted for the work. All that discrimination has entirely disappeared now on the State Railways. All the Company Railways have been addressed, and without exception they have agreed to put an end to this discrimination, with the result that there is no discrimination between an Indian, an Anglo-Indian or a European now. In the old days, admittedly there was discrimination.

K-815a. *Mr. Parsons* : Did not Mr. Ryan, late Secretary of the Railway Board, tell the Royal Commission on Public Services of 1912 that the

railway staff was largely recruited from Europeans and Anglo-Indians for maintaining the security of the country ; and that both from the military point of view and from the point of view of internal security had to place reliance on the European Officers only ?

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : But that was 17 years ago.

*Mr. Frasad* : My point is that this distrust is responsible for the racial discrimination that has been practised up to this day though it has been abolished in theory.—(*Mr. Russell*) : If it is a question of fact whether Mr. Ryan said that or not I am prepared to admit that he did. But I do not think I can commit myself to what Mr. Ryan stated 17 years ago.

K-815b. *Mr. Joshi* : The policy has changed. That is part of old history. It may not have been an entirely full statement of the policy pursued even then.

K-816. *Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : But are not the railway administrations acting on this secret policy in actual practice, though that has been abolished in theory ?—Emphatically no.

K-817. The Code rules clearly lay down this racial discrimination for which the Railway Board are responsible. Anyhow I shall not press the matter. In the year 1870 orders were issued by the Secretary of State that Indianization of the railway services should take place. I maintain that these orders have not been carried out up to the present time. One of the officers of the North-Western Railway is reported to have said that it is the function of the Railway Board to import mechanics from Europe. If that policy of the Secretary of State of 1870 had been carried out, there would have been no need to import mechanics and mechanical engineers from abroad. Why are they importing mechanical engineers from abroad even to this day ?—We are importing mechanical engineers from abroad, because there is not a sufficient supply in India. Up to the last two or three years it was absolutely impossible to find any Indian to go in for mechanical training in the shops. Now I am glad to say that there are many really good, well educated Indian boys going in for this kind of work. But in the old days we could not get a sufficient supply of Indians and that was the reason why we had to import mechanical engineers from abroad.

K-818. *The Chairman* : You are taking definite steps to train Indians here ?—We train them here or send them Home. I am glad to say that a good number of really well-educated Indian boys are coming into the mechanical services and I am sure they are going to do well. (*Mr. Hayman*) : This year particularly we are going to appoint four or five Indians to the Mechanical Engineering Service.

K-819. *Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : Even to this day I receive complaints from young men that they are not given sufficient opportunities to train themselves in the mechanical workshops ; and that though racial distinction has been abolished in theory, in actual practice it works as a hardship against the Indians.—(*Mr. Russell*) : Is it suggested that we are not carrying out the policy which has been clearly laid down ? If so, I must deny this.

K-820. *The Chairman* : The suggestion is that even to-day there are no adequate facilities for Indians to be trained for these posts on

the railway services.—(Mr. Hayman) : That is not a correct statement of facts.

K-821. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : How many vacancies were there last year and how many were filled by Indians ?—(Mr. Hayman) : To what class are you referring ?

K-822. Subordinates.—(Mr. Hayman) : We have rules for the training in our workshops of all classes of employees. For the past 10 years we have been getting a large number of Indians trained in workshop practice and coming forward as qualified artisans, journeymen and chargemen. In course of time these men will qualify for the higher ranks of assistant foremen and foremen.

K-823. *Mr. Joshi* : Will you be able to give us figures on this matter ? —Yes.

K-824. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Can you give us figures as to which particular grades you have trained up, which particular grades need training up and which particular grades are being more or less exclusively recruited from Indians ?—If the Chairman wants a concise statement of facts on that point, we will undertake to give it.

K-825. *The Chairman* : It would be interesting to have it. Are you finding in recent times that the tendency of the educated Indian to look only to clerical and legal occupation is giving way to a new interest in industrial pursuits ?—There is a change, but it is taking place gradually. There are certain classes of work into which I myself have tried to get some educated Indians, because I thought the prospects were good for them, for instance, firemen starting on Rs. 50 or Rs. 60 with allowances and chances of promotion. I have tried about 20 or 30 boys, and everyone refused to go into that class of post. On the other hand, we have a large number who are willing to be trained as workshop apprentices.

K-826. Do you do anything, through the masters of secondary schools, to point out the advantages, to the boys before they leave schools ?—We in the Railway Board do not do that, but we suggest to our Agents that they should do it.

K-827. It seems to me that that tendency might be helped by the advice of school masters a year or two before the boys leave the schools.—We will bear that more prominently in mind.

K-828. *Mr. Gregory* : Is it not a fact that in the new methods of fixing the bonus rates, an assurance is given in the workshops that no rate will be changed unless the method is changed ?—That is a procedure which has recently been introduced on the N. W. Railway but I must say that the procedure as to bonus and piece-work payments is different on different railways. We have in recent years organized a Production Department, which studies up-to-date methods. The N. W. Railway and the G. I. P. Railway are more advanced than other Railways in these methods. Speaking from memory, the N. W. Railway have adopted the procedure that you describe.

K-829. The statement is made in the memorandum that " Pay is generally fixed on an incremental basis so as to admit of the grant of increases as the employee's service and age increase ". A considerable number of complaints, however, come in with regard to the incremental



scale adopted on railways. The complaints from the Unions are that man reaches a maximum of the lower grades and remains on that maximum for quite a long period, even up to the time of his superannuation. In this connection it is stated that it is proposed to examine this question in order to remove blocks. Can you let the Commission know how far this examination has progressed, or the lines on which you propose to pursue the examination ?—The question is one which the Railway Board proposes to examine very soon. This point was urged by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation before Sir George Rainy, and he told them there were certain other urgent matters which required the attention of the Railway Board, and that this would be taken up in its turn. I think we will be able to take it up in the next 5 or 6 months ; but that does not mean that we have not taken some steps to see that this question receives attention. I myself have spoken to almost every one of the Agents of the State-worked railways, and have brought this point to their notice, and I know that, in a few cases at any rate, an examination has been made of those scales where people have been stopped at the maximum for a considerable time ; and in certain cases the scales have been improved. Besides that, we sent a copy of these papers to the Agents of the Company-worked lines, and asked them to look into the matter. In examining this matter we have to consider two very important opposing factors. One is the desire on the part of men never to be blocked at any time. The other is that our business is a commercial proposition and we have to see that we do not pay, in different classes, more than we ought to pay for the work done. If a man is any good he does not get blocked at these lower grades. He goes on getting promotion from one class to another.

K-830. *The Chairman* : Is it the case that it is always open to a man to advance from one grade to a higher grade ?—That is so in almost every one of our departments. In the subordinate grades a man, for instance, who came as a Ticket Collector on a small rate of pay could become a Station Superintendent if he was really good.

K-831. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : But in practice he is blocked ?—He is blocked perhaps at some stage beyond which his capacity will not take him.

K-832. We had statistics given us by the N. W. Railway Union which showed that in some cases 100 per cent. of the workers in a particular cadre are blocked ?—I cannot see how anybody can prove that 100 per cent. of people are blocked in any grade.

K-833. *The Chairman* : Clearly the number of vacancies in the higher posts is, in every service, less, and to that extent blocks cannot be avoided. What I am anxious to know is whether there is open a ladder of advancement throughout the service ?—Clearly there is.

K-834. *Mr. Gregory* : It is stated, " Under the East Indian Railway Rules holiday allowances are only given to Europeans and Anglo-Indians ". Is that still the case ?—No.

K-835. When the hours of work rules were being introduced, certain calculations had to be made in regard to continuous and intermittent workers. Can you give an idea as to the percentage of intermittent workers ?—We have called for information from railway administrations.

and we have received most of the replies. They indicate that the percentage will be about 20 per cent., but we have not examined these replies, and would not commit ourselves definitely to that figure.

K-836. *Colonel Gidney* : Is it a fact that the policy of Government, so far as the Anglo-Indian and domiciled European community is concerned, is that for employment on railways these communities are considered as natives of India ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes.

K-836a. That is for all purposes of Indianisation ?—Yes.

K-836b. Is it also a fact that the same communities, for defence purposes, are considered European British subjects ?—That question must be put to the Army Department.

K-837. Is it the policy of the Railway Board to fix a minimum wage for railway labourers ?—No.

K-838. Is there any Department in the Government of India that will assist you in attaining a minimum living wage ? Will you take it from me that a correct basis for fixing a minimum wage would be the standard and cost of living ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : You suggest that some other Department of the Government of India might help us. The position would be entirely the other way round. The question of establishing a minimum wage would be one for consideration, if not by Provincial Governments, by another Department of the Government of India and not by ourselves, to which Department we should give as much assistance as we could by collecting statistics and so on. It is therefore very difficult for members of the Railway Board, or for members of the Railway Department of the Government of India, to take up points of this description and to give a definite opinion.

*The Chairman* : You are entitled to say that it does not lie within your province.

K-838a. *Col. Gidney* : The Railways being an all-India service, does it not lie within their province ?—I should like to appeal to Mr. Clow if I have not fairly stated the constitutional position in this matter.

K-839. Will you agree with me that there is a difference in the standard of living between different Indian communities ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : It probably costs one more to live than another.

K-840. Will you agree that there is a difference in the standard and cost of living between an Anglo-Indian and an Indian ?—I think we might agree.

K-841. Am I correct in saying that you are reducing the wages of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European abruptly ?—Certainly not.

K-842. Might I prove that by referring you to the new rates of pay on the E. I. Railway, in which firemen have had their initial standards of pay reduced by 50 per cent., and their maximum standards reduced by 75 per cent. These reductions have taken place this year ?—We have not in recent years, on any railway in India, gone in for reductions in the scales of pay of subordinates, speaking generally. The E. I. Railway was rather peculiarly situated a few years ago. The Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway was amalgamated with it. There were different scales of pay on the O. and R. Railway and on the E. I. Railway. Naturally we wanted

to co-ordinate these scales, and so co-ordinated scales were introduced which, for some classes of staff, were lower for the future than the old E. I. Railway scales. In certain cases they are higher than they were for the O. and R. Railway scales. It is only that co-ordination of scales on the E. I. Railway to which you are referring. The individual case of firemen looks very bad, but if you go down the scales you will find hundreds of cases which do not look bad, and some that look well. I have got out the figures of the co-ordinated scales on the E. I. Railway. For the whole of the employees on the E. I. Railway, the net reduction in wages which will be reached after some years will be about 30,000 rupees per annum ; so that the net reduction in wages year by year will be very small, because only new entrants are to come on to the new co-ordinated scales. All the old people will have their old scales, even in the grades to which they may be eventually promoted.

K-843. I do not agree. I have before me an official copy of these E. I. Railway revised rates. I do not notice in these rates any equality, much less improvement of wages. Take the firemen—Indians, Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans. There are three grades. At the old rate in the third grade the pay was Rs. 15 to Rs. 17 p. m. It is now Rs. 15 to Rs. 16. In the second grade it is Rs. 17 to Rs. 18. In the old grade it was Rs. 23. In the senior grade it is now Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 ; in the old grade it was Rs. 80 to Rs. 120. I notice that from the highest to the lowest appointments there is a uniform reduction in wages, and I am astonished when I hear it means a total difference of Rs. 30,000 only. Will you explain that to me ?—I can only say that I actually worked out these scales myself with the Agent of the E. I. Railway, and we got the financial value of these scales taken out in accordance with the methods laid down by the Government Actuary.

K-844. I notice that, taking the Oudh and Rohilkhund Railway, in the old rates for Station Masters, for all communities, there is a reduction in one grade from Rs. 340 to Rs. 280 ; in another grade from Rs. 290 to Rs. 150, and in another grade from Rs. 140 to Rs. 120. Taking Ticket Collectors, in the old Oudh and Rohilkhund rates it was Rs. 120. Now it is Rs. 100. Another rate was Rs. 90 ; now it is Rs. 67. Are you reducing the wages of Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans, and Indians, abruptly ?—No.

K-845. Is it or is it not the policy of the Government of India that the economic position of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European on the railways, if altered, should be only effected slowly and gradually ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes.

K-846. Do I understand aright that in the posts of Guards and Firemen (which Anglo-Indians have filled in the past) a fair proportion of these appointments will continue to be given to Anglo-Indians and that they will be paid on rates of pay closely corresponding to rates at which they have hitherto been employed ?—A reasonable proportion.

K-847. Will you tell me how long it takes a Ticket Collector to become an efficient Station Master ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : It depends entirely on the Ticket Collector.

K-848. I mean a man of average intelligence ?—A Ticket Collector may be recruited at the age of 18.

K-849. After how many years' service, I mean ?—I do not suppose that men are promoted to Station Masters short of 35 or 40 years of age.

K-850. That means 15 to 20 years' service. What about a Station Superintendent ?—There are only four altogether, on the E. I. Railway. Men would probably not be promoted to such posts till near the end of their service.

K-851. That means about 30 years' service. A man may be made a superintendent in the last 2 or 3 years of his service ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : It might be earlier. A Station Superintendent is a matter of pure selection. He might be a very young man.

K-852. How long would it take a Fireman to become an efficient Driver ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : He becomes a shunter in about 6 years, and a goods driver about 2 years after that.

K-853. And he becomes a foreman after about 20 to 25 years of service ?—A young man of good ability can be a foreman quite early.

*The Chairman* : There is selection by merit.

K-854. *Colonel Gidney* : Most of the senior appointments in the Traffic and Loco Sections are to-day held by Europeans and Anglo-Indians. Am I right in saying that the reason they hold these posts is by continuity of service ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I think so, and suitability for the work.

K-855. Can you give any idea as to how long ago Indians showed this desire for employment on the railways ?—I do not know myself, but I see you state it is from about 1920. I should have thought it was very much earlier.

K-856. Say it was in 1910 ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We would not like to commit ourselves to a date.

K-857. Do you agree that what I have already stated is the reason why there is a preponderance of Europeans and Anglo-Indians in these upper subordinate posts to-day ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes. In the olden days they took more readily to railway work.

K-858. Therefore, as years go on, Indians will get into their positions ?—I think Indians are bound to do so.

K-859. They cannot get into these appointments without experience and merit ?—No.

K-859a. You do not subscribe to the policy that every entrant should become a foreman or a Station Superintendent ?—They could not possibly do so.

K-859b. It is only by merit and efficiency ?—Yes.

K-860. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Can you supply us with the agreements with the Company-worked Railways ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : Yes.

K-861. And also a statement regarding the commitments of Government to this class of Railways, together with a statement covering the period up to when these agreements expire ?—Yes.

*Diwan Chaman Lall* : What is the policy of the Railway Board in regard to the acquisition of these Railways which are run by companies ?

*The Chairman* : That is a question of high policy for the Government of India.

*Diwan Chaman Lall* : Do you think that State controlled ownership and management has been a success ?

*The Chairman* : Surely ! It is these gentlemen's job !

K-862. You say that you are contemplating measures regarding the employment conditions of the lowest paid employees. What are the measures that you contemplate ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Everything that concerns the conditions of service, pay, leave, housing conditions, hours of work—anything you can think of. I have an exact table made out of the different matters that we have to investigate, and the urgency with which we shall tackle them.

K-863. Was this matter undertaken first of all after Mr. Hayman took charge of his new office as Labour Member of the Railway Board ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Not entirely, but it has been more concentrated, because the old Member had not the time to devote to it that Mr. Hayman has.

K-864. Is it contemplated, in regard to these changes that you intend to bring about, that the workers' organizations will be consulted ?—I do not think that is contemplated.

K-865. Do you not think it is necessary and essential, in order to get a contented labour force, that you should so consult the representatives of the workers, e.g., the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, representing all the Railway Unions and the Anglo-Indian organization ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : It would depend entirely on the nature of the problem we were considering at the time. Assuming it was a question of pay or leave, I do not think we should be prepared to consult any organization outside ourselves. If it were a question of hours of work or possibly housing—at any rate in regard to types of houses—I do not think we would rule out the possibility of consulting the representatives of the labour concerned. Whether the organization would be an All-India one or representative of the workmen affected on a particular railway would be a matter for very careful consideration.

K-866. Supposing the changes you are contemplating in regard to hours of work result in great dissatisfaction on the railways amongst the workers, which may lead to a strike, would it not be your business to try to avoid such an eventuality ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : It is our business to try to frame the rules in such a way that there will not be a strike.

K-867. How can you avoid such a possibility as I have indicated unless you consult the workers' representatives ?—We are in the closest touch with the workers in our attempts to draw up these rules.

K-868. Have you any objection, therefore, to consulting a definite body like the All-India Railwaymen's Federation before you definitely decide to bring about these changes ?—In answer to that question I can only say that the Railway Board will consider it. You mention solely the All-India Railwaymen's Federation. The hours of work in Bombay may not, owing to the different habits of the people, suit the workers in Bengal. The proper organization to consult, therefore, in that case may not be the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, but the local organization.

K-869. There does not exist any machinery at present whereby you can be constantly in touch with the workers' organization in regard to any changes that you may bring about in their status or rates of pay or

work ?—Broadly speaking, that is a statement of fact, if you are referring to all India.

K-870. Would it not be desirable if such a machinery for joint consultation were set up ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I think it is a thing which is worthy of consideration, and it certainly will be considered.

K-871. Questions were put about grievances from individuals, and you said that these must come through a union, and the union must certify that they were correct ?—I did not say that they must come through the union. Before we can possibly consider a case we must be assured that the union themselves are convinced that it is a true case.

K-872. *Mr. Cliff* : It is put through a sieve of common-sense ?—Yes.

K-873. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : You would be prepared to consider cases like that ?—We are prepared to consider them.

K-874. May I mention the case of Ladikram ? This was six months ago. It was a case which was gone into by the Railwaymen's Federation and by the Union Committee. What action has the Railway Board taken in regard to this particular case ?—The Agent himself dealt with this, as it was entirely within his powers.

K-875. Will you take it from me that neither the Railwaymen's Federation nor the Union nor the man himself have been informed of what action has been taken ?—We are not aware of the facts.

K-876. You say it was referred to the Agent.—I think I said that the Agent was competent to deal with this case, and he did.

K-877. Is it not a fact that any time any grievance on any particular railway system has been brought to the notice of the Railway Board, the reply always has been " This is within the competence of the Agent " ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I should say it is not a fact. There have been several cases in which we have taken action, and others which we have promised to investigate ourselves.

K-878. Would it not be desirable for the local administrations also to have some sort of machinery for joint consultation with the representatives of the workers ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : All the major railways have a special man who does go into the individual grievances of the staff, especially in the workshops. It has been mainly in connection with the workshops so far. The B., B. & C. I. Railway have extended it to their open line staff. There is a special Indian Officer who goes personally into the grievances, and I believe in certain cases he has discussed them with the unions.

K-879. Would you have any objection to extending that system of setting up a joint board, let us say, for that particular purpose ?—I am not prepared to commit myself to that at present.

K-880. Will you consider it ?—Certainly. What you want to do is to get the unions to put their houses in order. If they do that, they will get much more sympathetic treatment from the railway administrations.

K-881. Taking that particular point, is it the policy of the Railway Board to assist these unions which they have recognized so far, to put their houses in order ? For instance, would the Railway Board be

willing to give free passes to the organizers of these unions ?—It has been decided not to do so, for it is not the policy of the Railway Board to grant free passes to such officials. (*Mr. Parsons*) : The policy is for the railways not to give from railway revenues financial assistance (which a free pass amounts to) to the unions. It would be equivalent to a subsidy to the funds of the union. .

*The Chairman* : Looking to Western practice, I am not aware that free passes are given on the Railways to officers of Unions, but leave is, I think, given.

*Mr. Cliff* : Leave is given, and if a man has obtained leave from the Railway there will be no difficulty about him using the special privileges which are accorded to railway servants as railway servants.

*The witness* : (*Mr. Parsons*) : May I say that that is exactly our policy, namely, that reasonable facilities shall be given to railway employees who are officials of the unions, or even if they are not, to attend meetings of the unions, and there is no objection whatever to their using passes to which, as railway men, they are entitled for the purpose of attending union meetings.

K-882. *The Chairman* : May I put it in this way—that you are following the English practice ?—If it is as just stated by *Mr. Cliff*, Yes.

K-883. *Mr. Cliff* : Are you prepared to give, or are you giving, facilities to your own work-people to travel in order to collect over their area union subscriptions ?—You mean special facilities in the way of extra passes ?

K-884. Yes ?—We give no extra passes to collect union subscriptions.

*The Chairman* : You would not call that Western practice ?

*Mr. Cliff* : I understand that the administration in the first place have in certain cases given passes to officers of unions who are not necessarily work-people, and then I understand there were some facilities for the collection of union subscriptions.

*The Chairman* : That was for one year.

*Mr. Cliff* : No. That has obtained on some Railways for a long period of years.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : Is that in India ?

*Mr. Cliff* : In India.

*The Chairman* : You would not suggest that that was Western practice ?

*Mr. Cliff* : No.

*The witness* (*Mr. Parsons*) : In certain cases, and on certain railways, passes were given to officials of a union even if they were not Railway employees, to travel about the railway on union business. There were different practices on different Railways. Some gave them and others did not. We considered the matter a year or more ago, and decided that there was not sufficient reason to give these passes any longer.

K-885. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : How do you reconcile this position which you are taking up, of not affording facilities for union organizers to

travel with free passes in order to do their union work, with your desire to help trade unionism on the railways ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : The granting of free passes is equivalent to a grant to the union of a certain sum of money, and the Railway Board do not feel that they should grant sums of money to unions. We do not consider it desirable to give financial assistance, either in a direct form or in an indirect form, to the unions. There are many other ways in which, by co-operation, railways can assist unions to get themselves into a better position.

K-886. Do you give free passes to every superior official with which he travels freely on your railways ?—Yes.

K-887. You state that the Railway Board does not interfere in the conditions of Company-managed Railways. What is the general rule in regard to State interference with Company-managed Railways ? How far can you interfere ? What steps can you take in order to ensure that the conditions of the staff are bettered ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : As far as the staff is concerned, we cannot interfere, but whenever we issue orders for a State Railway we send a copy of those orders to the Company-managed Railways with the recommendation that they be adopted.

K-888. There was a strike on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, and the Agent refused to accept the terms and conditions which were laid down by the Railway Board, although the Railway Board insisted on those conditions being accepted. (*Mr. Parsons*) : You refer to the Khargpur strike ? The position there was that it was under no rule, and probably not in accordance with the terms of our contract with the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. The Directors of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway reluctantly accepted to the request of the Government of India, on the understanding that any financial liability due to the acceptance of what the Government of India wished to do should not affect the surplus profits which go to their private shareholders.

K-889. *Mr. Cliff* : Can you tell me what were the reasons which led to the appointment of a Labour Member on the Railway Board ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : In the olden days, staff matters and transportation and traffic matters were dealt with by one Member, who was called the Member General ; but it was found that the traffic and transportation matters took up so much of his time that he could not devote sufficient attention to the claims of the staff.

K-890. What is the policy of the Railway Board in relation to labour problems on the railways ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : What we are doing at present is that the Staff Member is taking up the big problems one by one and going into them thoroughly.

K-891. Will you state so far, what are the six big problems facing you ?—Revision of pay, revision of hours of work, leave rules, education, and housing, I think, these are the major problems at present before us.

K-892. Have these been represented to you as being the biggest problems with which you should deal ?—They struck us as being the most important things as far as the staff was concerned. (*Mr. Parsons*) . We are in very close touch with the administrations. When we are on tour they come and see us. There is no lack of communication. Each individual railway will represent to us what its particular difficulties are with regard to its staff. (*Mr. Hayman*) : Besides I might say that we had,



placed before us by a deputation which waited on Sir George Rainy this year, the men's side of the case. The All-India Railwaymen's Federation put down all the matters which they thought required consideration and also indicated what they thought were the more urgent ones.

K-893. *Mr. Cliff* : Was that the usual form of making representations to you and voicing the needs of the work-people ?—Yes.

K-894. Was that put to Sir George Rainy or the Railway Board ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Sir George Rainy.

K-895. As Member in charge of Railways ?—Yes.

K-896. Have the Railway Board at any time received official representations from the trade unions either in federation or from separate unions ?—Actual deputations ?

K-897. Yes.—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I have been longest on the Railway Board and I cannot recollect of any official deputations to us. On several occasions we have met individual members of unions. And the Railway Board have been present when deputations were received by the Hon'ble Member in charge of Railways.

K-898. *The Chairman* : I take it that your position corresponds to the department in England and the Member corresponds to the Minister.—(*Mr. Parsons*) : To a certain extent that is true. We also have an independent position as a Railway Board with certain statutory powers.

K-899. But the tendency of deputations would be to go to the Member ?—That is so. They practically always ask to see the Member ; but they sometimes accompany that with a request to see the Railway Board. The All-India Railwaymen's Federation, for instance, met Sir George Rainy and the Railway Board.

K-900. *Mr. Cliff* : Were there a good many questions in the Legislative Assembly with regard to the grievances of railwaymen ?—I can answer that decidedly in the affirmative.

K-901. As far as I could see, the deputation which was received by Sir George Rainy was largely the result of political pressure ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I could not say for what reasons Sir George Rainy offered to meet the deputation.

K-902. Have you offered as a Railway Board, apart from the Member, to meet the All-India Railwaymen's Federation ?—We have not.

K-903. Seeing that a Labour Member has been appointed and in view of the fact that you are dealing with labour problems connected with 800,000 men, have you any definite policy with regard to dealing with railway unions in the settlement of labour problems ?—Do you mean that the Railway Board should meet representatives of unions ?

K-904. You have an All-India Federation of Railway unions. The Board has said : " We have a certain member of the Board to deal with labour problems ". Has it been decided that for the purpose of dealing with labour problems, you shall deal with the All-India Railwaymen's Federation ?—We have taken no such decision.

K-905. There was a deputation which waited on Sir George Rainy ; I think that was in May. Has any reply been sent to the delegation since

that date till now ?—We printed all the relevant papers and sent them to the Federation as showing the attitude of Government towards the questions they raised.

K-906. This document is a report of the discussion ?—Yes. We sent it officially to the Federation.

K-907. You were going to investigate and consider a number of problems which were brought before you ?—Yes.

K-908. Have you replied to the Federation respecting their representations ?—Beyond officially sending them a copy of the discussion we had on the matter we did nothing else in correspondence with the Federation.

K-909. Will you tell me the policy you propose pursuing in dealing with such problems as are spelt out here ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : All we can say at present is that that policy is being considered.

K-910. In reading this memorandum I find that there are so many problems to which the reply is : it is to be considered ?—I quite admit that.

K-911. What I am concerned about at the moment is to know whether this consideration results in decisions ?—I can say it does.

K-912. Will you tell me in respect of any one representation which is topical and current, the decision which has been taken ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : Do you mean to pick out one example ?

K-913. The choice is yours. I think there are 35 subjects. I understand they were begun a year ago. There were certain reasons why the meeting did not take place until May. And I am just concerned to see the working of the policy of the Railway Board now that it has a Labour Member, if you can tell me in respect of this particular document what decisions have been taken. I do not want to take the whole memorandum, because it may not be possible to deal with it.—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We considered that the more urgent matters were four or five. We took up the first complaint that has generally been made against railway administrations, i.e., that they act unfairly to the employees in matters of discharge and dismissal. We at once within the course of 15 days drew up a complete set of new rules regulating discharge and dismissal. We circulated these rules to all the railway administrations for their remarks. Those came in about a month or six weeks ago. Now we have sent forward to our Hon'ble Member a complete draft of the revised rules that we propose to issue. We hope that in a fortnight or so these rules will be issued. This is a very big question and has been a source of complaint for years. That has now been tackled.

Then the Leave Rules are bristling with difficulties. We have now drafted a full set of leave rules. Mr. Parsons explained to-day the stage at which they are at present. Then there was the question of revising the rates of pay of the lowest paid employees. In some cases we felt that some improvement was necessary. I myself went down to Calcutta on several occasions during this year and have now worked out proposals which I shall have to place before the Railway Board very shortly. Then there was another case that occupied a very considerable time. It dragged on for very many years. That was the question of giving full effect to the Washington and Geneva Conventions as to hours of duty and periods of rest.

K-914. Are you taking the two Conventions together ?—We have dealt with them together. We reached the stage when the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Department introduced a Bill last session in the Legislative Assembly. That problem will be discussed by a select committee of the House some time in January or soon after. We have tackled these problems ; we have done it with energy and a desire to bring into force the new rules as early as possible. Personally I have gone through all the points mentioned in the memorandum of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation and examined them carefully with reference to all the previous relevant papers. In several smaller matters I have set the machinery in motion. I have referred to the Agents such small matters as are within their powers to deal with. When I go on tour, as I make it a point to visit important places, I find out what has been done in all these matters. In fact it will be the duty of the Railway Board after a little time to summarize the position to the Hon'ble Member and to explain to him what we have done for each problem and what we propose further to do. I definitely claim that we have during the last few months made unprecedented progress.

K-915. You have accepted a series of representations made by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation. You have expressed your opinion as recorded in this document as to each one of the most important matters, and you have addressed yourself with all speed and all energy to deal with the problems. Is there at the moment in any one particular case a decision taken which has been communicated to those who made representations ?—I think, I said : No.

K-916. Mr. Russell has said that one of the conditions of recognition is that the union should put its house in order. That is the real condition of recognition. I shall deal later on with how far recognition goes. At the moment you have got a federation which has apparently put its house in order and made representations in May. It was formulated and presented last November. That union represents a certain number of employees ; the exact number does not matter. It has got to record at this moment that it has not had a definite reply except that the representations are to be considered. It has no decision to report to its members. Have you never put yourself in the position of another person ?—I do it almost every day.

K-916a. *Mr. Joshi* : Is it not a fact that a representation was sent long before the deputation met the Honourable Member ?

*Mr. Cliff* : That is clear from the notes. I want to get this point. This union put its house in order and yet has had no decisions on representations made by it. Would the Member in charge of Railway be prepared to accept a similar position from the Railway Board regarding its administration ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : It is difficult for the Railway Board to answer that question.

K-916b. I think I have got a number of the Railway Board here. But you wanted me to answer for the Honourable Member.

K-916c. Do you think that the Hon'ble Member would be satisfied with your administration ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : How can I answer that question ? It is for the Honourable Member to answer.

K-916d. Have you never put yourself in the position of another person ?—I do it almost every day.

K-317. You have been telling us this morning that you do put yourself in the position of an ordinary railway employee. Having put yourself in the position of an ordinary railway employee, would you be satisfied as a railway employee if your grievances and representations were dealt with in this way?—We believe that speaking generally our railway employees are contented with the way we deal with them.

K-918. I understand that this document is prepared by a body which has put its house in order and which is the only body entitled to speak for railway people?—That body was received and told on what lines we proposed to deal with the representations. We are faithfully dealing with those representations on the lines on which we told them we would deal with them.

*The Chairman* : Your point, Mr. Cliff, is that they have not been kept informed of the progress in dealing with their representations.

*Diwan Chaman Lall* : Nor consulted before the final decision.

K-919. *Mr. Cliff* : My point is that in the memoranda submitted to us by the railway unions, the burden of their complaint is that they are unable to get decisions. I am taking this as a current example and endeavouring to elicit the facts in one of a series of representations.—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I stated the facts very fully as to what we have done and how we propose to deal with the remaining questions.

K-920. These answers are on the note and I am content with that. Mr. Chaman Lall used the word "consultation". I want to use a higher word. Does the policy of the Railway Board include co-operation with the All-India Railwaymen's Federation or not?—(*Mr. Russell*) : We have already told you that we have not dealt with them direct so far.

K-921. One of the points of your memorandum is that you have appointed a man as Member with the specific duty of dealing with staff questions.—Yes.

K-922. The Unions are making representations on staff questions, and I am asking whether at the moment you have decided and determined for a policy of co-operation with the unions.—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We have not considered it really from the point of view of policy. But is it not a direct answer in a practical way that we received that deputation soon after my appointment and therefore have been able to have the benefit of their advice when we are examining these questions?

K-923. I have read this memorandum. I incline to the belief—may be wrong—that it was largely as a result of political pressure. Now that you have not made a decision with regard to co-operation with these unions on staff questions, are you at least in process of considering the establishment of regular relations between the All-India Railwaymen's Federation and yourself for dealing with labour problems?—(*Mr. Russell*) : No, we are not. It must be remembered that the Agents of Railways in India are more or less in the same position as General Managers at Home. So far we have left dealings with the unions to the Agents themselves. That has been our policy.

K-924. I am noting that. Have you not stated in your memorandum that you limit the Agent with regard to increase of wages to Rs. 25,000?—Each particular proposal at a time to Rs. 25,000.

K-925. One of you said that the first problem was rates of pay. Would you say that the Agent could in any comprehensive way deal with the class of labour which we call, ill-paid ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : It depends entirely on the size of the individual establishment ; because the Agent is not within the funds which are made available to him, limited to Rs. 25,000 in a year. He is only limited to Rs. 25,000 in raising the pay of any particular class of establishment. In a very large number of cases in which he finds that the lowest paid men in his opinion are too low-paid, he certainly will be able to deal with them, in spite of that restriction. If on the other hand he finds he cannot, he will represent the matter to the Railway Board. I do not think, normally he will find any difficulty with us, provided we have the money.

K-926. I assume that the programme contained in the representations put forward by these people is not within the competency of the separate Agents to deal with. I assume also that the Railway Board accepted that and proceeded to make the investigation which Mr. Hayman referred to.—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Not entirely. Even Sir George Rainy told the deputation that waited on him that certain matters were entirely within the competency of the several Agents and that he would draw their attention to them and that they would be dealt with by them.

K-927. I have read that ; but in other matters it is not so. If you are considering the question of raising the pay of low-paid servants, will you give instructions to the Agents to raise them ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I have begun an examination at Calcutta of the railways that go there, confining my attention at the moment to State-worked Railways, the Eastern Bengal Railway and the East Indian Railway. I am working in close consultation with the Agents. When we have dealt with Calcutta, if we find that comparing the wages in other centres and making due allowance for the different factors that have to be taken into consideration for different parts of India, that a detailed investigation on those lines ought to be conducted by us with the co-operation of the Agents, we shall follow that practice.

K-928. It appears that the Railway Board can deal with certain problems and the Agents can deal with others. Taking labour, first of all, I have an answer that you have not considered the establishment of any regular machinery or means of considering these problems. Have you given any instructions to the Railway Agents with regard to the matters that are within their competency ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Only what has been already stated here. They are at liberty to encourage unions working on proper lines.

K-929. I saw from the various memoranda that the Agents exercise a certain amount of discretion according to their own point of view. In your memorandum it is stated that " in considering the whole question of settling disputes between employers and employed it is necessary " to do certain things. Speaking quite frankly that paragraph fogs me. I would like, if I may, to have an explanation of what that means with regard to this question of settling disputes. Really what is the policy that is indicated there ? I am afraid it conflicts with any understanding that I have of Whitley Councils or other bodies of that nature and I should like to know what it means. I want to have a conception of the policy which is to be pursued. If it is to be a continuation of the policy which has been pursued I want an explanation of the following which say :

“ Trade unions are the creation of the workers ; conciliation boards are due to the intervention of outsiders in the general interests of the public, and the committees are the internal machinery in an industry devised to produce better relations between the employers and their workers, and depend on the initiative of the employer.”

It must be common knowledge to you that shop committees and Whitley Councils do not depend on the initiative of the employer.—(Mr. Russell) : It is a quotation from Sir Clement Hindley, the late Chief Commissioner of Railways. Local staff committees were initiated originally by the employer, this was not done because of a demand from the railway staff. It was done in order to help the staff. That was I think what Sir Clement Hindley meant.

K-930. In certain respects that is contradictory and meaningless. I have heard you answer a question this morning where you said that staff committees were not put in opposition to railway unions.—No.

K-931. On reading this, it leaves the impression that they were.—I can assure you on that point.

K-932. In view of the fact that staff committees were to deal with matters arising out of employment, have you considered the question of co-operation with the unions in the formation and constitution of these committees ?—No, we have not.

K-933. I have read the objects of the North Western Railway Workshops committees. I believe an answer has been given this morning that those committees provide a facility for dealing with very large questions. It is a very restricted facility that the North Western Railway provide ?—(Mr. Hayman) : I can give you an illustration of a concrete case. The staff committees of the workmen at Lillooah put forward some little time ago definite proposals with regard to the method of payment and leave. Their proposals were considered by the Agent and the Railway Board and accepted. The basis of service was changed from daily rate to monthly rate ; the men were given more leave terms. Those are big questions. They have to be carefully examined ; the cost came to lakhs of rupees.

K-934. Might it not be fairly stated that the bodies of railway workers that are most strongly organized and can make most noise get most attention ? Might that not fairly be said of this railway system throughout India ?—I can only speak for myself. I would examine each case entirely on its own merits without reference to the weight that is behind it.

K-934a. You have recorded for us a number of instances in which strikes have occurred. It is the amount of force and the inconvenience that they cause that seems to compel attention ?—(Mr. Russell) . The amount of inconvenience to the public ?

*The Chairman* : Is not that partly a political question ?

K-935. Mr. Cliff : I am dealing with your answers to earlier questions. I am rather interested to follow, first of all, how a union should put its house in order and then the question of determining whether they were really people who could represent the body of workmen. Mr. Russell, you have a union whose numbers constitute a small percentage of work-people and you say you do not recognize it ?—Not necessarily.

K-936. There are cases ?—There are cases on the Bengal and North Western Railway.

K-937. In that case who is competent to represent the work-people ?—They will represent themselves, as far as I see. It is rather difficult. Our claim is that this union with a very small percentage does not represent the majority of the staff though you might take cognizance of it to a certain extent, you certainly cannot give the same weight to its opinion as you could to that of a union which represents the vast majority of the staff, because in many cases in this country the minority does not represent the opinion of the majority.

K-938. This is what is left in my mind by the memoranda which we have received up-to-date : That if it is a question of raising the standard of life you must not compare them with Western standards ?—I quite agree.

K-939. But if it is a question of accepting a standard of conduct, namely, with regard to trade union representation, you must compare that with Western standards ?—Yes.

K-940. That seems to me to spell out the policy. I just want you to help me in this matter. As I understand it, you say to us, we welcome trade unionism provided it is trade unionism. You also say to us you have got a large body of illiterate staff. Now when the more advanced of the illiterate staff decide that combination is the wise thing for them ; until they progress to a certain level you say : “ No, we do not recognize you ”. Are you seeking to secure the co-operation of the kind of trade unionism which you suggest is essential before you deal with it ?—I do not quite understand. Do you mean to get to a certain level in numbers ?

*The Chairman* : Mr. Cliff's suggestion, I take it, is that you should not apply in the early stages of trade unions in India the standards of proportion which would be applicable in a Western country.

*Mr. Cliff* : It is true of all forms of organization.

*The witness* : I do not think we have insisted on that to the full extent, because though we have asked that a trade union, as far as possible, should represent the majority of the staff, I think you will find that trade unions in each case have been recognized long before they actually have represented the majority.

K-941. I should think that it must be so ; but I am concerned with your answers to certain questions this morning. I hope you are not going to press it too far ?—My answers have probably sounded harsher than the actual facts of the case really warrant.—(*Mr. Parsons*) : It seems to me that it is a question of degree. If a union represents only a minute fraction of the staff it is quite in a different position from that when it represents perhaps 10, 15 or 20 per cent. ; it is a question of degree.

K-942. It is very largely a question of degree, but as I understood it you yourself expressed the sentiment that : “ while we are not prepared to make financial subsidies we are prepared to co-operate in other ways ” ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes.

K-943. The most effective way I see of co-operating is in dealing promptly with representations that may be made by a body representing even a small section of the work-people.

K-944. *Mr. Ahmed* : Would you agree with the statement made by Sir Ernest Jackson on the 12th October last at Simla at a conference at which some of you were present that if the wages of the workers were increased even by 50 per cent. that money would go into the pockets of the money-lender ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes ; I think, to a certain extent, that is true.

K-945. *The Chairman* : I forget whether it is your statement—in one of these memoranda it is stated that the immediate effect of a rise in the wages is such as was described but very speedily that temporary effect is removed. You are referring particularly to absenteeism ?—I do not think that is our statement, but I know for a fact that if you increase the wages suddenly you do get broken time immediately ; it always happens. The men have got a standard of living of, say, Rs. 15 a month ; if you increase their pay to Rs. 20 suddenly they will still be living on Rs. 15 a month and be absent 25 per cent. of the time.

K-946. But only for a period ?—I am not prepared to say that.

K-946a. *Mr. Ahmed* : Do I take it that you agree with the statement of Sir Ernest Jackson ?—I think there is a good deal of truth in it.

K-946b. He said further that it will be the duty of the Royal Commission to suggest methods of ameliorating the conditions of labour. Will you help us by suggesting methods of getting the labourer out of the clutches of the money-lenders ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Firstly, he must learn to live within his income. We, on the other hand, on almost all railways, have done a great deal to help the men who fall into debt by the establishment of co-operative credit societies, and in particular cases we give advances from the fine fund to help those who are in distress.

*Mr. Cliff* : What is the amount of income within which you suggest he should live ?

*Mr. Ahmed* : I suppose Sir Ernest Jackson is familiar with the evidence you have given in your memorandum ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : He has not actually seen it.

K-946c. Can you, Mr. Russell add anything to what Mr. Hayman has said with regard to preventing working people from getting into debt ?—As Mr. Hayman has said, we have started co-operative credit societies and give loans to men at a reasonable rate of interest instead of their having to borrow from the *bania* at a high rate of interest.

K-946d. In your memorandum certain figures are given with regard to the Jackson co-operative credit society on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway. That is not the only railway ; there are so many ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) ; That is so.

K-946e. Can you tell us how far that object can be achieved, as it has been on the B., B. and C. I., on other lines ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I think every big railway has a co-operative credit society now and exactly the same conditions apply as on the B., B. and C. I. Railway.

K-947. You are in favour of enlarging the scope of these co-operative credit societies ?—Yes.



K-947a. To save the workers from the clutches of the money-lender ?—  
Yes, that is the policy of the Railway Board.

K-948. And you are now going to take steps to enlarge the scope of these co-operative credit societies ?—(Mr. Hayman) : Every railway has its organization already.

K-949. Mr. Cliff : I think Mr. Ahmed's point is with regard to the lower paid workers ?—(Mr. Russell) : I think on certain railways at present the lower paid employees do not get the same facilities as the higher paid ; but on other railways they do. (Mr. Hayman) : It is open to them, but they do not take advantage of it. I have been the Secretary of one of these co-operative credit societies. It is very difficult to induce low paid men to come to the society and get a loan because they get it from the nearest *bania*. I have told them " we are running this society for your benefit ; you should come to us ; you can get loans at a cheaper rate." But most of them do not want to come.

K-949a. Do I understand from you that people will not come to you if you lend money at a low rate of interest but will pay a higher rate to the *bania* ?—A large number will not come ; I know that they pay a higher rate.

K-950. The Chairman : Because they are already so much in the hands of the *bania* ?—That is one of the reasons, and another is they want money on the spur of the moment and they do not want to go through the procedure of putting in an application to be dealt with in a day or two ; they want the money on the spot.

K-950a. Mr. Ahmed : Will you advise them to file a schedule of insolvency and get rid of this lifelong trouble ?—No.

K-950b. Have you not got a lawyer to advise you in this department ?—No.

K-951. How are you going to relieve these poor men from their eternal indebtedness ?—On most of our railways we are appointing employment officers and it is part of their duties to inform the men of these co-operative credit societies. It is the recognized policy of our Agents to bring this more and more to the notice of the lower paid employees. There are signs that these men are coming a little more than before to take advantage of our co-operative credit societies. But the other difficulties which I mentioned and which the Chairman has mentioned still stand in the way of the lower paid staff coming to the society.

K-952. You have experience of co-operative stores, supplying *atta*, *dal*, etc. ?—Yes. Our idea is to help the lower paid staff as much as possible, but very often the lowest paid men do not come to us ; they buy from the *banias*.

K-952a. Do you mean to say that if they get  $1\frac{1}{2}$  seers of rice for the same price from the co-operative stores while they only get one seer from the *bania* they will not prefer to go to your co-operative stores ?—(Mr. Parsons) : I am not putting it so much on railway experience ; but I have had experience of co-operative societies also in districts. The position really is that these men are so tied to the *bania* that if they do not get their grain from him, he is very likely to foreclose his loan. At any rate he can make himself so objectionable in other ways that they would never dream of leaving him.

K-952b. So that your answer is that these people are in the habit of remaining indebted for ever and not to get rid of it ?—It is stating it too highly to say that they all are, but some would find it very difficult to get out of the hands of the *bania*.

K-952c. But certainly you are all experienced men on the railways and are familiar with the habits of the workers. What means would you suggest to ameliorate the condition of the worker and get rid of this eternal bondage of debt slavery ?

K-953. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Mr. Russell, with regard to wages, to what extent have you delegated powers to the various Agents ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : They have full powers over all the staff, except officers, up to Rs. 600.

K-954. And you give a yearly grant of Rs. 25,000 ?—No, that has nothing to do with that. They are not allowed to increase the wages of a group of staff if the total cost of all the increases for that group during a year would be more than Rs. 25,000.

K-955. Is Rs. 25,000, a flat rate that is applied to all the railways ?—Yes.

K-956. Take the East Indian Railway which has 150,000 hands or the Eastern Bengal Railway which has 50,000 hands. Do you arbitrarily give Rs. 25,000 to each of these railways ?—That is for increase in one group. There may be three or more groups of staff ; each can be given an increase of Rs. 25,000.

K-957. But you give the same amount to the Eastern Bengal Railway Agent as you give to the East Indian Railway Agent ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : Yes. The rule is applicable to all railways irrespective of the size of the railway or the responsibility of the Agent ; we have not reduced that figure of Rs. 25,000 for the smaller railways.

K-958. In financial matters I think you say that the powers of Company-managed Railways are on a par with those enjoyed by the Agents of State Railways ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes ; they have exactly the same powers.

K-959. Does that mean that you place the same limit of annual expenditure as regards groups on Company-managed Railways as on other railways ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : Yes ; and it is left to the Board of Directors to say what portion of those powers they would delegate to their Agents.

K-960. All Agents, as I read it, have the right of appointment, discharge and dismissal of all the lower paid staff ; it lies entirely in their hands ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Yes.

K-961. The lower paid unskilled staff is plentiful, I understand, on all lines ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Do you mean it is to be had easily ?

K-962. Yes.—Yes, except possibly in Burma.

K-962a. All the books I have read on the subject say that the unskilled labour is plentiful except perhaps in Burma and Baluchistan, and I see in your memorandum it is said : “ For these lower grades the only qualification required is good physique ”.—That is men doing ordinary coolie work.

K-962b. The North Western Railway go further and they add intelligence to physique. You do not lay that down as a general standard for the rest of the railways ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We have stated the general position after reading all the memoranda of the railways.

K-962c. You go by physique only ?—I want to be clear. In writing on that subject we tried to give the Commission information as to what was the practice generally on railways. The North Western Railway was, I think, the only one that added intelligence to physique for the very lowest class.

K-963. It is stated in your memorandum : “ In view of the fall in the cost of living in recent years there has been no occasion to undertake a further revision of the wages ”—that is, a general revision, but there have been small revisions here and there ?—Yes.

K-964. It is also stated : “ The revision which took place in 1920 was framed with due regard to the increase in the cost of living.” I have difficulty in reconciling that with the figures that have been put before us. For instance, you say in the United Provinces the increase in the cost of **living** was about 35 per cent. and in the Punjab you say it was as great as 100 per cent. Am I to infer from that that you gave to the employees in the United Provinces only 35 per cent. increase whereas in the Punjab you gave them 100 per cent. increase ?—The position was that we had to deal with certain figures of increase in wages in particular years. Taking the years 1920-21 and 1921-22, a large number of revisions of scales of pay were carried out at that time. Some of them were certainly carried out at a time when we knew that prices were at the very highest level. We did not necessarily then fix our wages at the very highest level ; as prudent people, we thought the prices would come down a little. Working on that basis, I do not think there has been great disparity of the percentage rise of wages on different railways. If you take individual cases you may find disparity, and it may be due to causes not entirely having reference to prices ; it may be that the original wage fixed was too low, and opportunity was taken to remedy that.

K-965. You must have found difficulty in explaining to the workers on the East Indian Railway why a higher increase was given to those in Delhi or Ambala as compared with those in the United Provinces and Bihar and Orissa ?—I do not think the Agents made any great number of distinctions. On the East Indian Railway they might have had two or three different rates.

K-966. It was immaterial whether the increase in the cost of living was 35 per cent. or 100 per cent., you did not differentiate very materially between the increases that were given to different workers ?—At the time we certainly took into account the trend of prices, the rise and fall, in two or three years. If the revision was carried out at a time when the prices were at their highest we allowed for a drop, and we found we had been reasonable in doing that.

K-967. You are instituting an inquiry regarding the lower paid staff ?—Yes.

K-968. Who initiated that committee ?—I had instructions from Sir George Rainy that that was one of the matters I had to take up soon after my appointment.

K-969. It came from above and not from below ?—The suggestion came from above that the Railway Board should examine it. Ordinarily that would be a matter within the power of the Agent of a railway to deal with.

K-970. Why was it necessary for the Member for Railways, who was not a Member of the Railway Board, to take the initiative instead of the initiative coming from the Agents or the Railway Board ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : May I add to Mr. Hayman's remarks in that respect ? I think my recollection is correct that we had in previous years representations from several railway administrations ; I think the East Indian Railway was one, and I think the B., B. and C. I. Railway and possibly the G. I. P. Railway were others. They made representations that certain classes of their staff were being paid too low and that a rise was now due. So that it is not exactly correct to say that the initiative came solely from above. It was in the ordinary way of doing business, as you know, when we heard of these things. When representations became fairly numerous we thought it desirable to give a general direction to the Agents.

K-970a. What are the factors that influence the Railway Agents, or the Railway Board when it comes to them, to decide what will be an equitable scale of wages to pay ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I think the answer to that will be found in our memorandum.

K-971. You have laid down four considerations with regard to an equitable scale of wages. The first is, class and responsibility of the work performed ; the second is, the principle of supply and demand ; the third is, the wages given by the contiguous railways and other industrial concerns ; and the last is, the varying local conditions. Under what head will the cost of living fall ?—The second and the fourth, I think, operate in that direction. What I mean is, the second and the fourth considerations would come into play from the point of view of prices.

K-972. Chiefly it is the principle of supply and demand ?—I would not like to say ' chiefly '.

K-973. I have got in front of me a statement from the Eastern Bengal Railway in which it is stated that scales of wages are incremental and are fixed in accordance with the class and the responsibility of the work and that in the past it had been based on the principle of supply and demand. It is quite true that in the recent revision of wages you did attempt to take into account the cost of living in Bengal, but they make a statement that it was the principle of supply and demand really that regulated wages. I see from the North-Western Railway memorandum that they also indicate that the principle of supply and demand is really the main factor in deciding what rates of wages ought to be paid to attract workers. I take it that in the past that was the broad principle upon which some of the Agents—I would like to make exceptions—acted ?—I think the North-Western Railway rates have not been fixed to give undue weight to the principle of supply and demand. I think an examination of their rates will show that they have fixed them with proper consideration of the other elements.

K-974. They say that in a well-managed concern wages are determined mainly by the nature of the responsibility, etc., and if so, it depends ultimately on the principle of supply and demand.—I think all of us who are employers must accept it that it is usually supply and demand that regulates the wages you have to pay to your unskilled workers.

K-974a. Do you accept that ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Answering for myself I certainly keep a very careful eye on the principle of supply and demand but I would not give it undue weight.

K-975. You are at present making an enquiry into the wages paid to the lower paid workers. In this matter you are going to take into account at least a living wage ?—Yes.

K-976. What statistics are available to you in this connection ?—We tried to find out things for ourselves at Calcutta.

K-977. Does that mean the Railway Board ?—I cannot commit the Railway Board yet ; I went down to Calcutta and I am still at the stage of making investigations myself in consultation with the Agent.

K-978. How do you yourself proceed to get the information ?—I go about among the men and find out what they eat and find out how much they eat and find out by studying wages what is the amount a man ought to spend on different things.

*Mr. Cliff* : It is probably so much below the living standard that they do not have to trouble about statistics yet.

K-979. *Sir Alexander Murray* : We do want to get statistics in order to try and arrive at a reasonable pay to be earned by workers generally, and so far in our wanderings round India though we have been asking what people eat and drink, where they live and what they wear, we have not yet got any idea of the cost of living for particular types of workers ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I think you will find great difficulty.

K-980. When you come to discuss this particular matter you are quite right to move about and investigate matters, but is there nothing to which you can refer us which you take into account when you are fixing wages ?

K-981. *The Chairman* : There is no agreed table of statistics in India, I gather, on this question ?—I think not.

K-982. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You say : “ In the absence of any reliable figure indicative of the cost of living, it is only possible to proceed in a general manner.” I suppose you pretty well leave it to the Agents of the railways to take all possible measures with a view to improving rates ; that is what you say here ?—Yes.

K-983. So that I may take it that you leave it to the Agents of the Railways ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : That is generally speaking correct. But in a particular case I have taken up this investigation at Calcutta. I have not come to a stage when I can give any figures because I have not worked out the figures, nor have I placed them before the Financial Commissioner and the Chief Commissioner of the Railways for their consideration. I have got them here. For different places in India generally and in Bengal I have worked out what a man requires for *dal*, vegetable, oils, spices, fuel, light, clothing and washing charges, rent and contingency for sickness and other matters, I am not in a position to give that to you. I have made preliminary investigation and I have circulated the results of this investigation to the Agents for consideration. I am going in a few days to try to work these out.

K-984. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Did you find that these figures as to cost of living differed very largely with regard to particular individuals in the same district ?—Speaking broadly, no.

K-985. *Mr. Cliff* : The All-India Federation made a representation with regard to revision of pay. The Railway Board are enquiring into that with a view to revising certain rates of pay. Would it be possible for the Railway Board to select, as far as railway works are concerned, a number of towns or districts wherein they could obtain a budget which would be an ordinary railwayman's budget. At the same time the All-India Railwaymen's Federation might be asked to obtain a budget. Both those budgets would be subjected to the observations of the other party in order that we may get some fair idea, without having to ask questions on all the budgets which are submitted in the memorandum before us.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : It is not in towns ; the railways run principally through districts. You could think over that and answer later.

K-986. In the North-Western Railway memorandum dealing with wages it is stated that the amenities provided by the North-Western Railway combined with the allowances, may be taken as an adequate living wage. How do you proceed to prove that or to disprove it ? You make a statement ; are we to accept it simply that it is an adequate living wage ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : That is not in our memorandum, is it ?

K-987. No ; but you say you leave these things to the Agent to settle ; the Agent in this particular case says he is giving the workers an adequate living wage ?—I am afraid we have not got the results of the examination which no doubt you made of the North-Western Railway on this point. The statement is the statement of that Railway and we have no grounds for disbelieving it. We have certainly no information on which we can question in detail how he arrives at his results.

*Mr. Cliff* : He has promised to investigate it, to try and furnish us with information, but at the moment he is not able to do so.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : He qualified that because he speaks of a comparison with the wages paid by industrial undertakings to workmen in similar categories.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : Whilst I find many references to cost of living and figures which may prove or disprove to the Commission the wages and the cost of living, I always ultimately come back to this, that wages are fixed according to the ordinary laws of supply and demand.

K-988. *The Chairman* : Mr. Parsons, I understand you wish to make a correction to an answer which you gave this morning ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I find I was incorrect when I said that the leave rules had to go to the Secretary of State. There are a few points in the leave rules which have to go to the Secretary of State, and we have reserved them for reference to him ; but the main body of the rules are within the powers of the Government of India. The introduction of the rules, therefore, now only awaits the agreement of the other Departments of the Government of India which are concerned.

K-989. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Where an Agent considers that the emoluments given by his Company constitute an adequate wage, and the Railway Board, or its representative, does not agree, whose opinion prevails ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : In the case of State-managed Railways, the Railway Board. In the case of Company-managed Railways, the Railway Board can only advise. They cannot compel an Agent of a Railway to introduce a new scale of pay.

K-990. But if the State-managed Railway alongside the Company-managed Railway increases its wages, I assume the latter must follow suit ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : They will hold out as long as possible, if they disagree.

K-991. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : In working out the percentage rise in wages, the Board has given the total amounts paid out. Therefore that percentage rise is really a weighted average, is it not ? You have given us the total amounts, but when we come down to the receipts per passenger mile that has apparently not been worked out from the total receipts per ton mile but from an average rate charged for the carriage of goods per ton mile. How is that average rate arrived at ?—Total receipts for goods divided by the total ton miles.

K-992. So, that really is a weighted average ?—Yes.

K-993. And the same applies to passengers ?—In each case.

K-994. Can you tell me what reserves accumulated from profits the railways have amassed in the last few years ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : The amount we have paid to the reserve fund, is about 20 crores.

K-995. What has been done with those profits ?—The reserves went into the balances of the Government of India—that is to say, the amount which remained over after the payment of all our commitments.

K-996. But they remained in your balance-sheet, did they not ?—They were shown on the balance-sheet to the credit of our reserve fund.

K-997. That is used for your capital expenditure ?—Yes.

K-998. In practice you might say that you use less borrowed money than you would otherwise ?—The Government of India have used less borrowed money.

K-999. Are you credited with interest on those reserves ?—At a certain rate.

K-1000. The same rate that you pay for extra money ?—No, not as much. The rate of interest which we receive on our reserve and depreciation fund balances is 1 per cent. below the rate on which the Government of India borrow in the particular year.

K-1001. *Mr. Clif* : *Sir Clement Hindley* says that in seven years you have put fifteen millions to the Railway Reserve Fund. That is from March 1922 to March 1929. Do you accept that ?—Not absolutely. We did not start as early as 1922. We started in 1924-25.

K-1002. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : What difference would a one per cent. drop in freight rates make to your net profits or net earnings ?—I will have to look up the figures.

K-1003. I understand that you are training your own compositors, machine-men, binders, etc. Would it be possible for you to use up some of the printers who have been "axed" in the Government presses ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We have employed a certain number of those men.

K-1004. Would it be impossible to employ them as long as there are any left ? Here you have a large body of men who are looking for work, axed by Government ?—We will offer to consider that very sympathetically.

K-1005. Referring to mechanical students, you have said that the ones you have been able to obtain are largely of poor quality. We have had a representation from the MacLagan College, which gets a subsidy from the Government, in which they complain that they are not well treated by the railways.—As regards officers, they wanted their pass students, A. class, to be eligible for appointments in the mechanical engineering superior establishment. One of our conditions for the recruitment of officers for the superior mechanical establishment is that they must have taken the A. M. I. M. E. or the A. M. I. C. E. in mechanical subjects. The Institution of Engineers, India, has not recognized the MacLagan College students in that respect, and the Principal of the College told me that the first thing he was going to do was to endeavour to get the Institution of Civil Engineers to recognize his students. When he has done that his students will be eligible for superior appointments. With regard to other apprentices, a complete statement of the case is given in the N. W. Railway memorandum.

K-1006. I notice that the accidents due to coupling and uncoupling of vehicles and to shunting operations have increased in three years from 45, to 54 and 62. Have you ever considered installing automatic couplings?—(Mr. Russell) : Yes. That has been under consideration for many years.

K-1007. Is it purely a question of expense?—Not altogether. It is to a certain extent. One estimate was five crores, and another was twelve crores. The existing rolling stock is not suitable for the automatic coupler, but all the new stock which is being bought is fitted with screw couplings but is also suitable to take automatic coupling in the future. We have some stock under trial. Our ultimate aim is to instal automatic couplings but I do not think it will be for many years to come.

K-1008. Is the grain compensation allowance still in existence?—The orders are still in force. They apply to all railways in India. The Company-worked Railways follow those orders.

K-1009. Is it applied actually in certain districts?—Yes.

K-1010. We were told, Mr. Parsons, that you saw no reason why wages should not be paid within a few days of the date on which they are due?—(Mr. Parsons) : I said we were hopeful of getting them paid within 4 or 5 days.

K-1011. We have been given a record of the delays. They vary according to the class. In the transportation staff the delay is between 4 and 8 days, but in certain cases, especially where piece-work is paid like the mechanical workshop, the delay goes up to 39 and 44 days.—My reply must be applied to the basic pay, and not to that portion of the wages which depends on an increase over a given out-turn.

K-1012. I quite appreciate that, but it would have seemed to me that you could have paid that in fifteen days, like private firms do with piece-work?—We will certainly investigate the possibility. I am just as anxious as any body else to pay the whole of a man's wages as early as possible. There are difficulties with regard to certain classes of piece-work. The stuff has to be examined in order to see that there has been no skimping of the work.

K-1013. My point is not that you can pay it within four or five days but that you might be able to pay it within fifteen days?—I should think it is possible, but I would not like to express a definite opinion.



K-1014. *The Chairman* : Mr. Russell, as I indicated at the beginning, with regard to the relationship between your internal works committees, or labour bureaux, or whatever name you may give to them, and the trade unions, you are no doubt aware that in England a means has been found to correlate the two, so that the works committees, where they exist, operate with the goodwill and with the assistance of the trade unions. Evidently that conception has not quite made good yet ?—It certainly has not made good yet in India.

K-1015. May I take it from what you have already said when you told me that you did not recognize any antagonism between the two, that you are prepared to consider bringing the two into relationship the one with the other ?—I am perfectly prepared to consider bringing them into closer relationship, yes.

K-1016. When this matter was reviewed in England some years ago by a committee of which I happened to be Chairman, great care was taken to see that the works committees should in no way be looked upon as a device for the exclusion of trade unions ?—I can assure you that there is no idea of that sort in India.

*The Chairman* : I have taken that already from your answers ; but my question suggests that, with all the advance that you have made in this matter in recent years, just a little more thinking may be required in order to avoid a danger which exists not only here but elsewhere in the possibility of works committees being looked upon as a device to prevent proper trade union working.

K-1017. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : In answer to a question you stated that the railways are run on a commercial basis as far as possible. That is further explained in the Hon'ble Member's speech in which he is reported to have said " If rates are raised the cost of industries is increased, the earnings of the merchant are diminished, for the volume of trade tends to decline. The price which the cultivator receives for his crops decreases and the consumer everywhere has to pay higher prices for what he buys. We have to balance the need for improving the standard of living of railway employees against the cost of dearer transport to the people of India as a whole ". That represents the policy which the Government of India pursues through the Railway Board. May I ask whether that applies to capital expenditure ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes. Before we embark on any new capital work we go very carefully into the return that may be expected, except in the case of quarters for the staff, on which we do not expect to get an adequate return on our capital.

K-1018. That is to say, in all capital works you debit in account the interest and sinking fund charges as expenditure ?—As revenue.

K-1019. Out of revenue as expenditure ?—Yes.

K-1020. Do you bear that in mind when you are building palatial railway stations ?—Certainly. The heavy capital expenditure on railway stations reduces the working cost of the stations, and we get a return on capital in that way. There are certain things like station buildings which are an absolutely essential adjunct to a station. You cannot allot a certain amount of revenue to them, but they are essentially part of the stations, and the cost is taken into account with the rest of the scheme.

K-1021. That is to say, when you are enquiring into that aspect of the question you are bearing in mind what is really necessary for administrative purposes?—Yes.

K-1022. You need a large number of skilled officers in the railway works in India, including administration. Is it laid down anywhere that qualifications which cannot be obtained in India are essential before appointment?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Our policy, both on State-managed Railways and Company-managed Railways, is to recruit 75 per cent. of our officers in India. Our recruitment rules for recruitment in India lay down qualifications which are obtainable only in India. We get 25 per cent. of our officers recruited from Great Britain, and we lay down the qualifications of the recruits from the United Kingdom.

K-1023. You said that out of the total number of officers 25 per cent. are recruited in Great Britain. They must possess some qualification which is not obtainable in India? Is that so?—They possess qualifications generally which are not obtainable in India.

K-1024. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Are there not certain posts which, if an Indian wanted to get, he would have to go to England in order to obtain the qualifications?—In the Mechanical Department and Transportation Power Department we have introduced a system of training apprentices here in India over a certain number of years, and then sending them to England for a couple of years for the completion of their training. These people will count against the 75 per cent. recruitment in India.

K-1025. As you have had to send them to England, they needed a qualification which they could not obtain in India?—For that particular branch.

K-1026. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : Is it not possible for you to provide training in India which would give sufficient qualification for the candidates to be appointed to all posts in India?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : You are referring to a matter of general policy of the Government of India as a result of the Lee Commission's Report. There it was decided that recruitment of Indians should be increased up to 75 per cent. of the vacancies. It was also decided that it was desirable that 25 per cent. of the vacancies should remain to be filled by persons recruited in Great Britain.

K-1026a. I am merely asking for information. I am not making any distinction between Indians and Europeans and Anglo-Indians. I merely ask if it is a fact that the policy of the Government of India, in spite of there being candidates available in India with the full requisite qualifications, is that 25 per cent. must be recruited in England?—The policy is that 25 per cent. of the recruitment of the superior officers for Railway service shall be obtained from England.

K-1026b. Whether they can be found in India or not?—I should not like to qualify in any particular way the statement I have made as to what the policy of the Government of India at present is.

K-1027. *The Chairman* : I take it from what you have said that the policy of the Government of India is that 25 per cent. of these posts should be reserved for recruits from Great Britain?—Yes.

K-1028. But from something else you have said, and by the fact of your sending some of your Indian apprentices to England for further

training, I take it that as regards a proportion at any rate of that 25 per cent. there are not at present qualified Indians to fill the posts?—(*Mr. Russell*) : This method of recruitment has only been in force for five years, and I do not think we can definitely say at present whether it is possible to fill that 25 per cent. by direct recruitment in India. I know for a fact that it is not possible to fill the posts on the mechanical side, and as to the other sides I think we want more experience before we can definitely say.

K-1029. With regard to the 75 per cent. of Indian recruitment, was that an increase on the then existing system?—A very large increase.

K-1030. It represented a considerable advance?—A very great advance, especially on the Company Railways. In the olden days the Company Railways recruited a comparatively small number of Indians.

K-1030a. Have you any rough figure with which the 75 per cent. can be compared?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We can supply you with the figures of the past and the present.

*Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : The figures you will supply will be what was the percentage at the time this policy was laid down by the Lee Commission, and to what extent you have reached the increased percentage now.

K-1031. *Mr. Clow* : There are several references in the memorandum to a Committee which enquired into the conditions in certain workshops at which, apparently, trouble had arisen or was anticipated. Could that Committee's Report be made available to us?—(*Mr. Russell*) : There is no objection to that at all.

K-1032. Referring to the matter of safety, Dr. Laborda's Report recommended suitable intervals with a view to reducing fatigue and, consequently, accidents. Were any experiments made in consequence of that Report, by varying the intervals?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I do not think so. The intervals are prescribed by the Factories Act.

K-1033. Does the Factories Act prevent you from making experiments to find out which intervals are most suitable?—Yes. (*Mr. Hayman*) : The position is that we have not information in the Railway Board about this matter, but each railway administration does look into these matters with reference to the latitude allowed by the Act, and with every desire to reduce the number of accidents to the lowest possible figure. I would not say that the administrations have not made experiments and tests.

K-1034. I wondered whether it was your opinion that the Factories Act stood in the way of what might be valuable experiments and valuable changes?—No. The Agents of the railways would not look upon the Factories Act like that.

K-1035. In the N. W. Railway Workshops at Lahore the pay, I understand, is given not to the men but to a pay-contractor, who is responsible for distributing it. Is that a common system on the railways?—It is only a question of the agency through which actual payments are made. There are two forms of getting payments made to men on railways in India ; one is by employing a departmental cashier, and the other is by having a contractor, who functions in the same way as a departmental cashier except that he is engaged on contract. We pay a lump sum figure to the contractor, and he arranges for all the payments according to the fixed programme that we lay down, and according to the fixed

procedure that we settle, which exactly corresponds with the procedure when the payments are made by a departmental cashier.

K-1036. Is the contractor in your service as the cashier is ?—No, but we have a proper contract with him, which prescribes that he shall do all those necessary things which a departmental cashier has to do.

K-1037. Is that a common system ?—It is in force on two or three railways.

K-1038. Is he responsible for giving advances to the men ?—He cannot give any advances. He pays what is on the authorized pay-bill, or advance sheet, or travelling allowance bill, or piece work system bill. He merely arranges for the payment.

K-1039. Am I wrong in supposing that in Lahore he does actually give advances to the men throughout the month as a private matter ?—(Mr. Parsons) : He possibly does. He acts, in a way, like a treasurer. Apart from his official duties, he may be a private banker.

K-1040. Do you not think it would be possible for your Board to consider paying instalments of wages in the form of advances, say weekly, with an adjustment at the end of the month ?—As we want first of all to aim at getting generally a quicker rate of payment instead of a long delay, I should be averse to establishing a weekly system of payment simultaneously. I would rather first get the period, which elapses before wages are paid, reduced. If we try to do too much all at once we shall fail in both directions. Also I am not entirely certain that the weekly payment of wages will be advantageous or acceptable to the men. There have been suggestions to the contrary. We should have to investigate the matter more fully before we express an opinion as to whether that system is desirable. I do not see any practical difficulties at the moment in adopting a weekly system of payment for our workshops, except one ; though we might have to put on more pay-clerks, that is not important. You cannot pay a large shop in this country at anything like the speed which you can in England. In a large shop here it takes fully half a day to pay out wages. Instead of a man just taking his wages after a glance to see that they are right, what happens here is that a coolie will get his wages, go away, ring each rupee in order to see whether it is false or not, and then come back and argue about something. The result is that the payment of wages takes a long time. If instead of 12 payments you are going to make 52 in a year you are going to take a lot of the man's private time out of his hands.

K-1041. You deal with the hours of work of the running staff. Can you give us any idea of the maximum daily hours that a man is expected to work continuously ?—(Mr. Russell) : Eight to ten, but there are cases where there are delays on a line and the man may work 12 to 14 hours.

K-1042. You say that in one case Drivers and Firemen running with mail passenger trains work from 60 to 70 hours a week. Would that be in continuous spells of 10 hours or over ?—Yes.

K-1043. You do not think that unduly long for continuous work ?—I think probably it is too long.

K-1044. You say the menial staff, both coaching and goods, work for 12 hours a day, or 84 hours a week. Is that genuine work, or is it intermittent ?—Intermittent.

K-1045. What, if any, is the effect of a strike on a man's gratuity ?—If it is declared a legal strike it has no effect at all on a man's gratuity.

K-1046. *Mr. Cliff* : That is assuming he is reinstated ?—Yes.

K-1047. What happens if he is not reinstated ? Does he get the gratuity ?—Yes, on his previous service.

K-1048. *The Chairman* : If he leaves the service of his own accord, does he get a settlement of the gratuity ?—Yes, he gets what is due to him up to the last day of his service.

K-1049. Including the employer's contribution ?—The gratuity is all given by the employer. It is a bonus contribution.

K-1050. *Colonel Gidney* : If he leaves the service to suit his own convenience he does not get his gratuity ?—No, unless he has put in a certain number of years service.

K-1051. *Mr. Clow* : As regards the provident fund, you state that certain employees are eligible. Does that mean that they are compelled to subscribe, or is it optional ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : With the staff generally it is compulsory over a certain wage.

K-1052. As regards workmen's compensation, I understand that normally the railways pay for what is known as "waiting time", although that is not required under the Act ?—In the olden days we had certain rules for compensation. If those rules are more favourable than the Workmen's Compensation Act, the railway employee gets the benefit of them.

K-1053. Do you consider the present scales under the Act adequate ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We are having that question examined, and are waiting for the views of the railway administrations.

K-1054. When an accident occurs do you ordinarily wait for an application from the man, or does the administration act of its own motion ?—We wait, ordinarily, for an application from the man, but if an application does not come in within a reasonable time, our officer takes steps to see that one comes in.

K-1055. Have you found that the introduction of the Act has led to any malingering ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I do not think it has.

K-1956. Would it not be advisable for the labour officer to have some system whereby he automatically takes up cases on report of an accident ?—So far, on most railways, the labour officer has confined his attention mainly to the workshops, because there is a large concentration of labour there. In that case, I think you can take it that he does enquire into each accident straight away.

K-1057. You have Personnel Officers looking after the running staff as well ?—Yes.

K-1058. *Mr. Birla* : I should like to pursue further the point about the recruitment of 75 per cent. in India. I take it that this recruitment is made through a competitive examination ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes.

K-1059. If in any year you get more successful candidates than your prescribed limit of 75 per cent., do you leave out the surplus ?—I do not think that has yet happened.

K-1060. What percentage do you get every year ?—You mean who pass the examination successfully ?

K-1061. Yes. Do you get your full complement of 75 per cent ?—*(Mr. Hayman)* : I can speak for the last two years. With regard to the Traffic Commercial Branch and the Civil Engineering Branch, the number of candidates whom the Public Service Commissioners considered were qualified for appointments exceeded the number that were required on the 75 per cent. basis.

K-1062. In that case, it is not correct to say that even if you wanted to increase the quota, you would not be getting sufficient numbers in India ?—I have stated the facts in reference to two branches of the superior service. That is not the position in respect of other branches of the superior service.

K-1063. If it is a fact that during the last two years you have been able to get more than 75 per cent. successful candidates in certain branches does not that inspire a belief that if you wanted to recruit more than 75 per cent. you could get them in India ?—We are not satisfied, until we have many more years of experience, that persons whom the Public Service Commission tell us are qualified for admission to the ranks of officers in our different departments are necessarily going to prove as efficient in their practical work as we would wish our officers to be. We want more experience.

K-1064. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Have you got over the 75 per cent. successful candidates in every branch ?—We tried this year to get mechanical engineers in India by advertisement, because we understood there were a certain number of Indians who were qualified as mechanical engineers in England and who were now in India, and we asked the Public Service Commission if they could recruit us a certain number. They have been able to find some qualified Indians for that branch.

K-1065. *Mr. Birla* : Can you give us a statement showing during the last five years the successful candidates and the number which you actually required and recruited ?—*(Mr. Hayman)* : These are the results sent to us by the Public Service Commission on which we act, and I am authorized by Mr. Russell to say that we will consider the question you put in consultation with them and if we can we will meet your wishes.

K-1066. Have you sent a number of students to England and other countries for training ?—Except with regard to mechanical engineering and transportation power branch, which I have explained, it is not our policy to send them to England for training.

K-1067. Do you send all your apprentices to England or to other foreign countries ?—Only the mechanical and transportation go to England.

K-1068. There is no other country to which you send apprentices ?—No. only England.

K-1069. What special facilities do you get for training in England ?—*(Mr. Russell)* : They can go to selected workshops ; not necessarily railway workshops but workshops where they manufacture locomotives and different kinds of machines. There is a much wider range in England. They are given experience in two or three works ; they do not stay in the same workshop all the time.

K-1070. You know that India next to the United States of America, is the largest railway owning country in the world ; but in spite of that you say that India cannot provide the same facilities for training Indian students as are provided in England ; is that your opinion ?—I do not think our workshop methods are quite as far advanced yet as they are at Home ; there is no doubt they are advancing remarkably rapidly and I think the time will come when it will be possible to train in this country.

K-1071. Is it the policy of the Railway Board to provide greater facilities in India for training rather than send the students to England for training ?—Yes, certainly, to try and improve the training in this country instead of sending them to England.

K-1072. With regard to what you say in your memorandum as to recreation, do you think the institutions established for the recreation of the Indian workmen are quite sufficient ?—You must consider that it is only during the last ten or twelve years that we have had such institutions. As a matter of fact I established one of the first in India, and we are adding to them from year to year. I do not think we have reached the limit yet and when necessity arises they will be added to.

K-1073. Do you think the progress has been quite satisfactory ?—I think it has been quite satisfactory so far.

K-1074. You will agree that you have in your employment more Indian workers than Europeans or Anglo-Indians ?—Yes.

K-1075. And yet on most of the railways you maintain more institutes for Europeans and Anglo-Indians than you do for Indians ?—I think one of the reasons was that until very lately the Indian railwayman was not prepared to be a member of an institute. Now things have changed and I think they appreciate the advantages of the institutes, and the institutes are being largely used by Indians.

K-1076. Do you think that state of things is due to any racial discrimination ?—I think probably in the past it was, but there is now no question of racial discrimination.

K-1077. With regard to the statement made in your memorandum as to the provisions which are made for education, you will find that much larger sums have been spent on education for European and Anglo-Indian employees than for Indian employees. May I take it that there again this state of things is not due to any racial discrimination ?—As you know, Indian education is a transferred subject, while European and Anglo-Indian education has been a Central subject. I think that is the reason. I know that certain railways, though not all the railways, make no differentiation whatsoever and have not done so for years. One of the reasons why more is spent on Anglo-Indian and European education is that it is more expensive.

K-1078. Am I to understand that the disparity exists on account of European and Anglo-Indian education being a reserved subject, and Indian education being a transferred subject ?—I am afraid I have rather misled you on that point.

K-1079. *Mr. Sastri* : The point was made in Lahore when we were examining representatives of the North-Western Railway ; this distinction was mentioned as accounting for the disparity ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : If I

may say so, I should be inclined to doubt whether that was the main reason. I think the disparity arises more from historical causes. At one time the number of Indians employed on the railways was much smaller. It also arose to a certain extent because there are more facilities for primary education in the small towns on the railways for Indians than for Anglo-Indians. I should not like to say that this distinction arose at the time when the distinction between the transferred and reserved subjects arose as the result of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report.

K-1080. Do you mean to say that where facilities for primary education for the Indian boys do not exist you provide facilities ?—I have made no such statement. What I said was that in those smaller stations you were more likely to find a primary school than to find a school in which the Europeans and Anglo-Indians could be educated ; I think that was quite definitely so. I do not think the practice of the railways grew up on any stated policy ; what they actually did was to provide a school where they found they could not keep their employees contented without doing so.

K-1081. Do you want to increase your budget in future in respect of the education of Indian children ?—There is no doubt that the new policy will very considerably increase our expenditure on the education of Indians.

K-1082. I want to point out one more discrimination as regards the rules as to leave. It is stated in your memorandum : “ It must be admitted that the latter contained an element of racial discrimination ” ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Our proposed new rules will remove all discrimination.

K-1083. That means that racial discrimination does exist up to the present but is going to be removed in the future ?—On certain of the railways, yes.

K-1084. *Mr. Joshi* : Mr. Russell, will you tell me what is the attitude of the railway unions towards your staff councils ?—I think they are not very favourable to them.

K-1085. Did you make enquiries as to why their attitude is not favourable ?—No, I do not understand why they are not favourable.

K-1086. Was it not your duty to make such enquiries ?—No, I do not think so.

K-1087. Was it your duty to make the staff councils successful ?—The staff councils were provided for the benefit of the staff and I think it was the duty of the staff to make the staff councils successful if they wished to.

K-1088. And also when you started them it was your duty to see that they succeeded in their object ?—I did not actually start them, but it was my duty or the duty of the men who did start them to give them a fair start in life.

K-1089. I read in the North Western Railway memorandum that they make a complaint that the staff does not take sufficient interest in the staff councils ; I wanted to find out whether there were any reasons for that. Are your staff councils elected or nominated or mixed bodies ?—Partly elected and partly nominated.



K-1090. What is your objection to making them wholly elected ?—*(Mr. Hayman)* : On the North Western Railway they are entirely elected.

K-1091. I am not asking about the North Western Railway now ?—*(Mr. Russell)* : On the G. I. P. Railway they are partly elected and partly nominated.

K-1092. Does the Railway Board generally tell the Railway Agents what should be the constitution of the staff councils ?—No.

K-1093. Do you think uniformity would be useful ?—No, I do not think so.

K-1094. Why do you think standardization would not be useful in this matter ?—I think there is a limit to standardization.

K-1095. I can understand that in certain matters standardization may be difficult ; for instance with regard to payment of wages in places like Madras and Bombay ; but is there any difficulty in standardizing the constitution of the staff councils ?—*(Mr. Hayman)* : There is no difficulty, but since we are at the beginning of things in this matter we would desire the railway administration not to stereotype their methods so that in course of time we may find out which is the best method.

K-1096. You want to find out whether the method of election or of nomination will be better ?—Or the mixed method.

K-1097. Do you consider that the fact that your staff councils are not elected bodies but are nominated bodies perhaps makes the railwaymen shy of these councils ?—*(Mr. Russell)* : I do not think so ; there is no evidence of that.

K-1098. Do you really think the Agents are the best persons to nominate the representatives of workmen ?—Yes, I think so in most cases.

K-1099. I ask you to look at this matter as a fair judge and not as a Commissioner of Railways. Would you prefer that the railwaymen's representatives should be appointed by a small union or by a railway Agent ?—I think it depends to a great extent on the Agent and on the union.

K-1100. But generally ?—I should not like to commit myself even generally.

K-1101. Your staff councils are local bodies, are they not ?—They are.

K-1102. Have you ever attempted to set up a staff council for the whole line ?—I can give you details of one of the systems ; on the G. I. P. Railway they have what are called station councils, where the Station Masters, loco foremen and various members of the staff can do certain minor things. Then there are divisional committees ; they can do anything within the Divisional Superintendent's power. Above that matters can be referred to a central committee, which sits periodically in Bombay. All the proceedings of that committee are seen by the Agent and he goes into everything himself personally. This central council can put forward recommendations on almost any subject.

K-1103. But at present you have no properly constituted body for the whole line ?—Yes, there is a central committee which sits at headquarters.

K-1104. Are you thinking of starting a central committee for the whole of India ?—You mean the Railway Board having a central committee for all the railways ?

K-1105. Yes ?—No, I do not think so.

K-1106. You do not think it will ever work ?—I do not think it will work.

K-1107. In that case if you really want to know the opinion of the railway employees you have no other source of information except the Railwaymen's Federation ?—I do not quite agree with that ; we have got the opinion of the administration of each railway.

K-1108. Has the Railway Board a definite policy that as soon as a grievance is placed before them it is better to look into that grievance immediately instead of waiting till the men utter a threat of strike ?—If a grievance is brought to the notice of the Railway Board our policy is to look into it as soon as possible.

K-1108a. Do you know of any instances where it would have been much better if the grievances had been removed before there was a threat of a strike ? As a Railway Agent of the G. I. P. Railway do you know there was a grievance with regard to medical inspection ; representations were made but the grievance was not removed, until after the threat of a strike of which as you know I did not approve ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : The threat of a strike had nothing to do with it.

K-1108b. That may be so, but I want to ask you whether the Railway Board has ever considered whether it is not a right policy to remove the grievances immediately instead of being compelled to remove them on the threat of a strike ?—The question of medical examination to which you refer, I can assure you, was being considered by the Railway Board, and by me personally in communication with the Railway Board. The Union as a matter of fact in that case delayed a settlement. They told me they were going to strike on a certain day. I happened to be going to Simla on that day to discuss this very question, and I had to stay in Bombay, so they delayed the decision by a fortnight.

K-1108c. There was another case in which the men represented that their work was so very hard and that more men were required ; more men were not supplied until after the threat of a strike ?—I know nothing about that ; I was not there at the time ; I think I was at Home on leave.

K-1108d. Have you now changed your policy with regard to not removing grievances until threats of strikes are made ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : You are presuming that that was our policy ; it was not.

K-1109. Do you realise even now that the consequences of the policy of not removing grievances until there is a threat of a strike are to develop the strike mentality among the workers ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : It certainly never was our policy to wait till we were threatened.

K-1109a. Supposing I bring to your notice not only those two instances but more instances which have taken place during this year, will you then admit that the Railway Board has been to some extent responsible for the development of strike mentality among the majority of the Indian railway employees ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We say certainly not.

*The Chairman* : It is a question between *post hoc* and *propter hoc*.

K-1110. *Mr. Joshi* : I am sure you realise that the question of racial discrimination causes discontent amongst the Indian railwaymen ; you also realise that as the Railway Board is constituted, consisting as it does, of Europeans and Anglo-Indians, there is a special responsibility upon you in this matter ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes.

K-1110a. There is not a single Indian in your ranks. Do you realise that that makes it necessary for you not only to be just to Indians but to convince others that you are just ?—I can assure you, speaking for myself, and I think for all the members of the Board, that we do try to be just.

K-1110b. I now desire to ask you for further information ; if you cannot give the information now perhaps you will send the information to the Commission later on in order that you may be able to satisfy this Commission and set this question at rest for all time, because this matter is not only causing discontent amongst railwaymen but among the general public. You say there is no racial discrimination existing now.

*Mr. Birla* : I think it was a qualified statement ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : There is no racial discrimination in the rules at present in force.

K-1110c. *Mr. Joshi* : But in practice it exists ?—No.

K-1110d. In the memorandum of the North Western Railway scales of pay for European, Anglo-Indian and Parsi drivers are given and there is a difference between Europeans and Anglo-Indians, Parsis and Indians ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : If you look at those figures you will find that in the 3rd column the new rates of pay are now applicable to all communities.

K-1110e. So that will you admit there was racial discrimination in the past ?—We now claim in matters of rates of pay on the North Western Railway there is no racial discrimination at all at present.

K-1110f. Then will you explain to me how it happens that the men who are now in service will be getting these discriminating rates of pay though that may not affect the men who are now coming in ? If that is not so, what is the necessity for showing separate rates for Europeans, Anglo-Indians, and Parsis ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I want to answer a practical point you put which I think is an important point. You have stated that we have introduced new scales of pay and you ask what has happened with regard to the people who had been in employment before these new scales of pay and were continuing in our employment. I have taken the opportunity of asking Mr. Gregory about this because he dealt with this when he was on the North Western Railway. He informs me that the existing people were fitted on to the new scales of pay.

K-1110g. So that racial discrimination will exist while the existing men are there ?—No ; I tried to make that clear just now that on the North Western Railway they took all the existing employees irrespective of community and put them on to the new scales of pay which are uniform for all.

K-1110h. So that there was no necessity for showing the rates of pay for Indians, Anglo-Indians, Parsis and Europeans ?—If we had been very wise we might not have done so.

K-1111. *Mr. Birla* : You have various grades which are called A, B, C and D. Do you appoint Indians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans equally to all grades, or do you appoint Europeans and Anglo-Indians to all the higher grades and begin the Indians on the lower grades ? In other words, do you appoint to grades purely on merit or is there any discrimination with regard to grades ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Purely on merit ; there is no discrimination on account of race.

K-1112. *Mr. Joshi* : But does it so happen that you find that more Europeans and Anglo-Indians are fit for the higher grades while only a small number of Indians are found to be fit for the higher grades ?—Taking Drivers and Firemen I certainly find that more Europeans and Anglo-Indians are fit for the higher grades than Indians.

K-1113. Is not this method of appointing Europeans and Anglo-Indians to the higher grades and appointing Indians to the lower grades in practice a method of maintaining racial discrimination while abolishing it in theory ?—I think we are to a certain extent talking at cross purposes. When men come into the service they are appointed to the lower grade, all on the same pay ; it is only when they get into the higher grades, which are selection grades, that there may be in the case of Firemen and Drivers a larger proportion of Europeans and Anglo-Indians because they are particularly fitted for the work.

K-1114. Do you also make some distinction between Indians and Anglo-Indians and Europeans in regard to promotions from one grade to another ?—No distinction at all

K-1115. It merely happens by merit that Anglo-Indians go to higher grades more quickly than the Indians ?—That has got to be proved.

K-1116. I want to know whether it is a fact. If you say it is not a fact I will leave the point, but if you admit it is a fact then am I to understand that you are preserving racial discrimination by devious methods ?—I do not think you can say that definitely yet, because these new grades have only come into force lately. If you ask us about that seven years hence, we shall be able to tell you what is the result.

K-1117. I am asking you to give me your opinion in order to satisfy the ordinary people that by the methods of promotion you are not really maintaining racial discrimination. Can you show us by figures as to vacancies filled and men promoted that such racial discrimination is not maintained ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I happened to be the head of one of the big Departments of the Railway Board—the Accounts Department, and the results as I found them were that the Indians got on much faster than the Anglo-Indians in the Department.

K-1117a. *The Chairman* : How far is it possible for you to give us a statement on that matter ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : We will do our best to supply what information we have got. *Mr. Hayman* says it is possible to do so.

K-1118. *Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola has raised a point with regard to the 25 per cent. reservation of appointments. Is not that reservation contrary to the recommendations of the Islington Commission in 1916, according to which all appointments of the superior officers should be made in India and that men should be trained in India. That recommendation is contained in paragraph 32, pages 22 and 23 of their report ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I am afraid we have not got a copy of the report here. It was definitely in accordance with the recommendations of another Commission which reported at a later date.

K-1118a. What is the settled policy of the Railway Board now with regard to racial discrimination ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : That there shall be no racial discrimination whatever ; that is the declared policy.

K-1119. Are the Company Railways prepared to accept this policy ?—Every Company has written to us to say that they will do so.

K-1120. But I find that the Railway Board's memorandum contains the statement : " As already explained in the introductory chapter, the Railway Board are not in a position in establishment and labour questions to enforce their policy on the Company-managed Railways but can only suggest reforms and improvements."

*The Chairman* : To save time : it is stated that although they cannot compel these privately-owned Railways they accept the same position.

*Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : Yes, I understand they have done it, but very often answers have been given in the Legislative Assembly to the effect that the Railway Board cannot interfere with the actions of the Companies Railways ?

*The witness (Mr. Hayman)* : That is so.

*The Chairman* : The two things are not inconsistent ; they have not power to order.

*Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : But they have power ; they have been evading these questions all along. They have the power in their contracts ; they have the power of veto in all matters.

*The witness (Mr. Parsons)* : The Government Director in England can, I think, veto a proposal for extra expenditure on a railway. I am not sure about that. But it does not mean therefore that either the Government Director in England or the Railway Board out here can force a Company-managed railway to pay more to a particular class of staff ; they can say : " You shall not pay more than so much " : they cannot say " You shall do so ".

*Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : The powers are summarised in the Report of the Mackay Committee of 1908 ; that lays it down that the Railway Board have full power in all matters over the affairs of the companies.

*The Chairman* : Is it important when we have got the point that the private companies have undertaken to carry out this same policy ?

*Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : In this matter there may be other questions hereafter, and I want to establish the point that the Railway Board have power and they do not exercise it.

K-1121. Will the Railway Board allow the benefit of State Railway leave rules to all employees without any distinction as to caste, creed, colour

or position ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We have made that very clear ; the new leave rules which are for establishments of State-worked Railways contain no element of racial discrimination whatever.

K-1122. Do they contain discrimination as regards class ; that is to say, there is more leave for the subordinate staff and less leave for menials and others ?—It is a graded scale of leave with reference to the different classes of employees.

*The Chairman* : A graded scale is common on all railways.

K-1123. *Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : Throughout the rules of the Government of India in the Civil Service Regulations the lower a man stands, the less are his claims ; throughout the poorest man, who deserves greater consideration, gets the smallest amount of pay and gets least in privileges. Will the Railway Board lay down uniform rules applicable to all classes and positions for leave and appointment and everything ?—We do not propose to do so.

K-1124. I want to know if any Europeans are appointed in these lowest grades in which the salary varies from Rs. 24 to Rs. 60 per month ?—We have had some such appointments in the lower grades, but not many, because they will not come into those grades.

K-1125. On the North Western Railway to-day is there a single Indian Driver or Guard in receipt of Rs. 210 per month ?—Most certainly. There is a statement in our yearly report which gives full information on that subject, and shows there are a large number of Indians who are drawing more than Rs. 250.

K-1125a. But is there to-day a single Indian guard getting Rs. 210 or Rs. 230 a month on the North Western Railway ?—I could not answer for the North Western Railway in that detail, but I can answer that the North Western Railway give us information here of the number of Indians they have on more than Rs. 250 for all their departments taken together. *Mr. Gregory*, who has local knowledge, says there are some.

*Mr. Gregory* : The man you saw in charge of the labour bureau in the loco shops was a guard and is now officiating as a warden. There are other guards as well. He must have been receiving something like Rs. 200 as a guard ; he was in that grade.

K-1126. *Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : I understand the Railway Board are going to give some encouragement to railway men to form their unions ; will you give the following privileges or concessions to railway-men's unions : (1) the collection of subscriptions through pay sheets ?—No.

K-1127. (2) Grant of free passes to the President, the Secretary and the Delegates of the union ?—No.

K-1128. (3) Permission to hold meetings of the unions in the railway institute or other railway premises ?—Generally we allow that. (*Mr. Russell*) : That is a matter left to the committee of the particular institute.

K-1129. Then may I take it that you will allow that ?—We will leave it entirely to the discretion of the committee of the particular institute.

K-1130. (4) Use of notice boards for union notices ?—We have stated very fully in our memorandum the facilities which we give.

K-1131. *Colonel Gidney* : Is this percentage of 75 Indians and 25 Europeans which was laid down by the Lee Commission to be reached in 25 or 30 years ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : It was laid down that it was to be reached as quickly as possible.

K-1132. Apart from the new scheme regarding Superior Power and Transportation apprentices to which the Chairman just referred, has the Railway Board in the Traffic or Loco Departments of any Railways made any effort to give a complete training for the supply of its officials in this country, instead of demanding, as they do at present, that our sons in India must go to England before they are fit for employment in India ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : It is only mechanical apprentices who are sent to England ; the Indian officers in the other departments are entirely trained in India.

K-1133. But has the Railway Board made any effort to establish an up-to-date first class training school or college in India to supply all India's needs in engineering ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Mr. Russell has dealt with that.

K-1134. Is it true that you have, for instance, a railway accounts competitive examination and you give salaries according to the number of marks obtained ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : That is so.

K-1135. Are you prepared to apply that system to other departments, so as to get intellectual boys at higher rates of pay and bring the pay up to a living standard ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We will consider that.

K-1136. There have been complaints on the railways that subordinates find it difficult to get their appeals heard by higher authorities. Is it a fact that an officer of one of the railways wrote on the discharge of a subordinate employee words to this effect :—" You are discharged under clause 2 of terms of your agreement, and you are to note that against this order of discharge there is no argument and no appeal ". Is that true ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I do not know ; I could not tell you.

*Colonel Gidney* : I know this case has gone to the Railway Board.

*Mr. Sastri* : We have heard this formula before.

K-1137. *Colonel Gidney* : I mention this case to show how appeals are treated and considered ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Out of our hundreds of officers one particular officer might have done it.

K-1138. I do not wish to suggest that the high pay that is given to officers is obtained by reducing the pay of subordinates ; but to satisfy my mind and to eradicate any element of suspicion, will the Railway Board kindly give the Commission figures for each railway on the following points : (a) the number and total pay of the subordinate staff, excluding men say up to Rs. 30 per mensem, (b) of the superior staff, down to the Local Traffic Service ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes, we will get those figures out for you.

K-1139. *Mr. Sastri* : Is there a precise distinction laid down between the subordinate and superior staff ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Certainly, they are distinct classes.

K-1140. *Colonel Gidney* : My object is to show that the official administration is top-heavy, and that there is an inordinately high expenditure on the official staff as compared with the subordinate staff ?—I am sure our figures will prove the contrary.

K-1141. You state that housing accommodation varies on different railways. Is the Railway Board aware that many subordinates have to rent private houses at very high rates in order to live in comfort, and that they are given a small allowance to cover that expense? For instance, in Calcutta house rents are very high. What is the policy of the Railway Board on this matter; does it intend to start an extensive and intensive house building policy?—(*Mr. Russell*) : No, not an intensive house building policy. All these points are being looked into very very carefully, and in places, chiefly workshops far from the towns, we have provided quarters. In places like Calcutta and Bombay we have not definitely provided quarters in the past and I do not think we will do so in the future. We are making an experiment at Lillooah.

K-1142. Will you consider relieving this difficulty by increasing the house allowances?—We will consider it.

K-1143. Is it a fact that railway servants are slaves to overtime? For instance, a Driver is a slave to overtime, and though he makes money, he does so at the expense of his health?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I think they are some of the hardest people one meets.

K-1144. They may be for a time, but the work eventually tells on their health at times quite unexpectedly. Is there a difference, in regard to overtime, between the loco and traffic departments? For instance, if a Guard goes on a 100 miles trip it may take him 15 or 20 hours to do this, but he gets no overtime, he is paid for the trip only but the Driver gets overtime and mileage? Is that true?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I think the Guard gets mileage.

K-1145. He gets mileage, but for that trip he gets nothing for overtime?—I am not absolutely certain, but I think on different railways the system is different.

K-1146. Since both Driver and Guard are equally responsible for the safety of a train, will you consider the advisability of equalising the conditions of overtime, etc., of the Driver and the Guard?—I think the reason mileage was brought into force was that in the old days trains used to be deliberately run late in certain cases, and so the mileage system was introduced.

K-1146a. At Lahore I asked a question about hours of rest with a view to preserving the health of the staff and preventing accidents happening when fatigued and overworked. If a man were working longer hours than he should and an accident happened owing to the fatigue or collapse due to overwork, who would be held responsible, fined, punished, discharged or sent to jail: the overworked and fatigued driver or the officer or Railway which demanded the system and rules which led to excessive overtime?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : It would depend on the merits of the case.

K-1146b. I am asking in such an accident what would be the principle adopted by the Railway Board?

*The Chairman* : That is a little hypothetical.

*Col. Gidney* : Very well Sir, let that pass as it cannot be answered. As regards rest demanded after overwork I have evidence which I will give confidentially to the Railway Board and the Commission. Let me read the orders of a certain Loco Officer and Foreman in such a case :



“ Warn this driver that he is expected to go out if required even if under rest. Unwilling workers are of no use in this division ”, “ Such drivers claiming rest are of no use in stations such as this : and your defence is required against the charge entered below : Your explanation is required for seeking rest ”. These are instances which I quote in order to show the Commission that this giving of stated periods of rest is a huge camouflage.

*The Chairman* : Colonel Gidney, as I said in Lahore, I do not think you are quite appreciating your position as an Assistant Commissioner.

*Col. Gidney* : I am sorry, Sir, if I have transgressed.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : Col. Gidney, why could not this information be given to us by some witness ?

*Col. Gidney* : These are all matters of policy, hence my asking the Railway Board.

K-1147. With regard to the new railway education scheme, much has been said on the question of European and Anglo-Indian education *versus* Indian education. Is it a fact that the children of Anglo-Indian and European employees of railways are situated in stations where there are no educational facilities beyond the 3rd or 4th standard ?—There are cases ; yes, I think that is quite right.

K-1147a And if their parents desire them to proceed further in their education, they have to send them to expensive hill schools and boarding schools ?—Yes.

*Diwan Chaman Lall* : Does not that apply to Indians as well ?

*Col. Gidney* : Yes. Such education is very expensive as compared with Indian education. Is it a fact that the greater cost of European higher education is due to the greater cost of the teachers ?

*The Chairman* : I think we are fully seized of that.

*Col. Gidney* : So long as you are, I am quite happy about it and shall not further pursue the subject.

K-1148. *Colonel Russell* : You say in your memorandum, “ A desirable reform in the workshops would be to provide suitable washing and bathing arrangements for men who work in the foundries, etc., and get extremely dirty ”. Is that reform going to be introduced ?—Yes, these reforms will be introduced.

K-1149. Does the same answer apply to what is further stated : “ At certain places, *e.g.*, Jamalpur, a complaint has also been received regarding the lack of a suitable place for men in which to take their meals during the interval ”. Is it the policy of the Railway Board to introduce these places ?—Yes.

K-1150. What is the constitution of the sanitary committees which have been formed at various centres ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : They consist of the Medical Officer, if there is one, or otherwise an Assistant Surgeon, a Sanitary Inspector, sometimes senior subordinates of the departments, and a local foreman or station master.

K-1151. But you say that at the smaller stations they are composed of the Station Master and certain other subordinates. What sanitary knowledge have these people got ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : They have a Sanitary Inspector either at the station or moving about from station to station.

K-1151a. Your memorandum contains the statement : " The Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway reports that the standard of health of railway employees is not high due to " four reasons. Does the Railway Board accept those reasons : " (1) lack of adequate nourishment ; (2), general overcrowding in dwellings " , and so on ?—This was put here because it was so stated by the B., B. & C. I. Railway ; the Railway Board are not prepared to accept that.

*Col. Russell* : That is the point I wanted to bring out, because I propose to ask the B., B. & C. I. Railway about this.

K-1152. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Is the Railway Board a statutory body ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : For certain purposes it is, under the Railway Act.

K-1153. It was not created by statute and I mean that the constitution of the Railway Board can be changed by executive order ?—Yes.

K-1153a. As far as the constitution is concerned, it is not a statutory body ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : That is agreed.

K-1154. Is there a single Indian Member of the Railway Board ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : No.

K-1155. Is there a single Indian who is the Agent of any railway in India ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes, the Agent of the Mysore Railway. On the minor railways there are quite a number.

K-1155a. Do you think the great distrust that exists amongst the workers ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I do not agree with the use of the word " mistrust " ; I do not think it does exist.

K-1156. Are you aware of the numerous occasions on which grievances and complaints on behalf of the workers have been brought to the notice of the Railway Board, the Agents and the Legislative Assembly ?—I have seen many complaints.

K-1157. Is that not an indication of the mistrust which exists in the minds of the workers ?—I do not think so.

K-1158. Do you think a better state of affairs might result if you were to pursue a policy of Indianization as far as the Agents and the Railway Board are concerned ?—I do not think so ; I do not think we as Europeans are mistrusted.

K-1159. Why has there not been an Indian appointed so far by the Railway Board as Agent ?—That is a matter for the Government of India.

K-1160. Do I take it the Railway Board is amenable to the opinion expressed in the Legislative Assembly in regard to the grievances of the workers ?—They pay great attention to it.

K-1161. Are you aware that resolutions have been passed in the Legislative Assembly demanding enquiries into the grievances of the subordinate staff ?—Yes.

K-1162. What action has been taken by the Railway Board in regard to those resolutions ?—I think every one of those has been examined.

K-1163. I am referring to the resolutions which were passed on three different occasions demanding that a committee of inquiry should be set up to examine the grievances of the subordinate staff ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : The Government of India decided not to set up a committee of inquiry.

K-1163a. In so far as that is concerned the Railway Board has not been amenable ?—I think what Mr. Russell was trying to make it clear was that those resolutions spoke of detailed matters for which a committee of inquiry was demanded. Every one of those matters has been fully examined.

K-1163b. Was or was not a committee of inquiry appointed in pursuance of the resolutions passed in the Legislative Assembly ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : No committee was appointed.

K-1164. In regard to free quarters, I find that from the 1st August 1928 the workers who are engaged on night work are no longer eligible for free quarters. Were the workers consulted before this very serious step was taken ?—No.

K-1164a. Suppose you had had a strike as a result of all this, on whom would have fallen the responsibility ?—But we have not had a strike.

*The Chairman* : That is a hypothetical question.

K-1165. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Do you not think that it is advisable in matters of this kind which affect the emoluments of the workers and their convenience that you should institute an inquiry and consult the workers before you take a step of this character ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : That does not affect the privileges or emoluments of any existing worker.

K-1166. Does Mr. Parsons imply that you can take away free quarters from a man and yet it does not affect the amount of money that he receives ?—Because we gave him an allowance equivalent to what he was going to be charged.

K-1167. Has that been done in every case ?—Yes.

K-1168. Are you aware of cases where these workers have had to go and engage quarters and pay twice the rent that you are giving them ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I do not follow what you exactly mean. Not one of those who had quarters has been turned out. We were giving them free quarters before but we are now charging rent. If an employee lives in the quarters he pays rent which is deducted from his salary, but he gets an addition to the salary equivalent to the payment of his rent. The existing employee is exactly in the same position as he was before.

K-1169. So that really he is paying nothing ?—Yes.

K-1170. In regard to leave, are you thinking of adopting fundamental leave rules as in the case of other departments ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : No.

K-1171. Why not ?—We think they are entirely unsuited to the general circumstances of the railways.

K-1172. On what do you base your opinion that they are unsuitable ? Is it or is it not a fact that the workers have asked for fundamental leave rules ?—Partly because of the recommendation of the Acworth Committee and partly because we are entirely a commercial department, the leave rules which apply to the ordinary departments of the Government of India or the Provincial Governments are not suitable to us.

K-1173. Are you aware that the Government of India also consider the Posts and Telegraph Department to be of the same type, namely, a commercial department, and is it not a fact that they have fundamental leave rules ?—I am afraid I could not answer for that particular department.

K-1173a. Apart from this you have no other reason ?—We do not think the fundamental rules are at all suited to a commercial department.

K-1173b. Have you ever consulted the workers' organizations in this behalf ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : No.

K-1174. In regard to the question of the Washington and Geneva Conventions, there is a demand made by the workers that there should be a leave reserve. Are you making provision for this ?—We are working towards it in our new rules which are under preparation.

K-1174a. Probably you have seen the memoranda that have been submitted to the Royal Commission on behalf of the railway unions ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : We have not.

K-1174b. Do I take it that you will examine those memoranda when they are brought to your notice ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I presume they are for the Labour Commission.

K-1174c. You do not intend to examine them ?—They have submitted these memoranda to the Royal Commission and not to the Railway Board.

K-1174d. Suppose they are submitted to you, would you not take steps to examine them and call a conference representative of the Railway Board and of the Workers' organizations in order to come to a settlement in regard to the grievances that they have put forward ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I do not think we could possibly agree to do that.

*The Chairman* : It would depend upon whether or not we refer them. As the memoranda have been addressed to us I do not think it would be proper to refer them to the Railway Board.

*Diwan Chaman Lall* : Suppose the railway organizations which have submitted these memoranda to us submit them to the Railway Board and ask for a conference ?

*The Chairman* : That is another question.

*The witness (Mr. Russell)* : I do not think we would call for a conference ; but we will ask the Agents to see if there is anything in it.

K-1174e. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Why not ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : Because, if you are dealing with a very big organization such as the railways in India, you cannot centralize to the extent which your question suggests.

K-1175. *Mr. Cliff* : Will you tell the Commission what representations a man who has been subjected to a disciplinary action can make to a superior officer or the Agent of a railway ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : He can make representation on any subject which he thinks affects him to the authority next higher to that which inflicted the punishment or a censure upon him.

K-1176. Do I take it that if a Traffic Inspector takes disciplinary action against a railway Guard, the latter can make an appeal to the Traffic Superintendent ?—To the Assistant Traffic Superintendent. (*Mr. Hannay*) : I do not think a Traffic Inspector can take disciplinary action against a Guard. (*Mr. Hayman*) : What I meant was that if a Guard

wanted to make an appeal he should do it to the Assistant Traffic Superintendent.

K-1177. I will ask you in detail about fines later on, but I have seen schedules wherein disciplinary action was taken and the amount that the men were fined was Rs. 10. Will you tell me which officer has the right to fine men on the traffic staff Rs. 10?—Usually the District Traffic Superintendent. (*Mr. Hannay*): The senior scale officer; I cannot speak for every railway or district.

K-1178. Who can be appealed to against that punishment?—The Divisional Superintendent or the head of the department as the case may be.

K-1179. Does he do that in writing or can he do that personally?—He does it in writing; there is nothing against his doing it personally.

K-1180. In making an appeal against the action taken, can he be represented either by an employee or by a trade union official?—(*Mr. Russell*): It has not been our practice to allow him to be represented by anybody.

K-1181. So the only remedy is that he can make an appeal in writing to the next superior officer?—Yes; the superior officer makes enquiries and his decision is final.

K-1182. We saw a case at Lahore where a man had been fined and he had written on three occasions and the reply from the officer to whom the appeal lay was to the next officer: 'Will you tell so and so that if he does not stop writing he will be reduced.' Would that be expressing fairly the operation of the appeal system?—Certainly not. If that had come to our notice we would have disapproved of such an action.

K-1183. Take a case like this: an employee gets a letter from the Chief Mechanical Engineer—"Please inform W. V. R. that his services are no longer required by the railway from date and that he will be given one month's pay in lieu of notice; also he will be given seven days' leave which is due; gratuity under the rules will be paid to him." A note at the bottom—*N.B.*—If the party concerned has anything to say in the matter of his punishment he should do so in writing without delay, and in case of loco staff through his foreman and district officer. Then you have "Forwarded to Mr. W. V. R. signed (I suppose it means the signature) Illegible, Loco Superintendent." "Received under protest, subject to appeal (Sd.) W. V. R. 9-7; note received at 11 A.M., and made to leave the office at once." Is that an example of the way a man is discharged?—I do not think that is a normal example when a man is discharged.

K-1184. The documents that I have in my hand have been sent to Mr. Hayman, I think, as late as the 1st of this month, so that I am dealing with cases that can be investigated. I have one or two documents handed to me—they may be exceptional, I do not know,—but, first of all, I see that the man receives the note at 11 A.M. and he is made to leave the office at once. Now, that appears to me to be wrong?—If it is discharge.

K-1185. Would you agree that that was an arbitrary case?—Personally I would not have done that.

K-1186. This document has a certificate attached. You have got the heading of the railway; his name, his father's name, his nationality and caste, where he was born, what his employment

was, how long he was in the department (in this case he was in the department from 14th May 1915 to 16th July 1928), what his pay was, and lastly it says : service no longer required. That is evidently a certificate, which is only granted to an employee leaving after 12 months continuous service. The first document which I read is dated 9th of July 1928. On the 14th of July 1928 a notice is addressed to this man which says : " I have to inform you that your quarters must be vacated within 10 days from the date on which your wages were offered to you ; for example, you must vacate your quarters on or before Thursday the 19th instant." That is signed by the Chief Mechanical Engineer. Here is a man who has been in the employ for 15 years, who has received a notice which gives no reason for discharge, who is told that within ten days from the day for which he last received his pay he should vacate his quarters.—That cannot be the case of a man who was discharged.

K-1187. May I say that the notes given to the man make no allegation of misconduct ; secondly, may I say that it is a case of individual discharge. I just want to find out whether this is a regular method of treatment and what opportunity a man has. Here is a letter from the Agent which is dated the 2nd of August. It says : " Dear Sir, With reference to your letter dated the 24th of July 1928, which has been forwarded to me by the Chief Mechanical Engineer and which I received when I was on tour, I beg to state that your services were dispensed with as they were no longer required by the Railway Company." That is signed by Carell ; I believe he is the Agent. First of all, there is a case where a man gets notice terminating his services ; it is quickly followed in a period of ten days that he should vacate his quarters ; that is followed by an appeal, to the effect, that there are certain domestic circumstances which he wants to put in front of the man who says he must vacate his quarters, which are legitimate reasons from the point of view of the man that he should not vacate. Thirdly, he makes an appeal to the Agent ; he receives a reply of the character I have read, namely, that his services are no longer required. I want to ask you, Mr. Russell, whether that is the kind of facility that a man has to appeal against a discharge terminating his services ? May I say the letter seems to indicate that there was nothing wrong, or he would not have got his gratuity ?—I do not think I can express an opinion until I know the full facts. This man must have been discharged either for very serious misconduct or because his presence in the railway was considered most undesirable. So that till I know the whole facts of the case it is difficult to give a reply.

K-1188. Some people may regard the presence of an active trade unionist as being undesirable. But that is not the point I am dealing with. What I am concerned with is to learn, if I can, what reasonable opportunity these men have of having their representations against disciplinary action like discharge and dismissal really considered. I have seen three or four instances—and I know it is not right to take three or four instances when you have over 800,000 employees—but I do want you to demonstrate to the Commission what real opportunity a man has of having his representations considered. Can you help us ? I understand you have been the Agent of the G. I. P. Railway. The G. I. P. Railway may be better or worse than other railways, but I am sure the Commission would welcome from your

experience a plain frank statement how these cases are dealt with and the difficulties which you have been confronted with in order that they may make recommendations as they are instructed in their terms of reference ?—I will give you my own personal experience on the G. I. P. Railway. In many cases we got appeals which were decided in the regular routine way. As you know, under the rules, the man has only right of appeal to the officer just above the one who inflicts the punishment. If it was a case of right of appeal to the Agent, the case was dealt with by me personally. I had a deputy in charge of staff, and every one of those cases that came up was dealt with personally by me in consultation with the department concerned ; in every case we got a full report and got reasons for dismissal. In certain cases—it did not happen very often—the discharge had been stopped and the decision of the junior officers had been reversed. But every single case was dealt with by the Deputy Agent or by me personally, and I think that is the general rule in the divisional offices. When a case comes up to the Divisional Superintendent, he deals with it in consultation with his Personnel Officer. Generally I am quite convinced that men do get a fair hearing. I think all the cases you got, Mr. Cliff, are the worst cases on the railways.

K-1189. We assume that you have good-will towards your employees and you want to do the just and right thing. Will you tell me whether in any case the man had an opportunity offered to enable some one to help him in making his representation ?—No, he had not.

K-1189a. Will you select at random and give us the result of a series of appeals made for a period of time on different railways so that we may see what has happened ?—I do not think that will help you.

K-1190. You say to me that I get only worst cases ; I think that is natural ; I agree with you. Now I want you to give me the other side of the picture.—We have given you in our memorandum only the actual working of the system and not the results. Suppose we give you the actual results. Suppose 100 appeals come to a certain officer and all of them are turned down. What does it show ?—It shows that either the original officer who inflicted the punishment was correct or that the officer who looked at the appeals was hard hearted. It does not give you any information.

K-1190a. I personally have taken quite a number of appeals and I have got a pretty wide experience of appeal cases in public services ?—I will however try to give you a memorandum on the lines you want.

K-1191. I want to see whether the officer with whom an appeal lies does modify the decisions of the persons below him ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : The instructions to our officers are in very precise terms ; it is to this effect : “ In no case and in no sense is an appeal to be treated as a mere formality.”

K-1192. I do not want to dogmatize on one particular case. I want to know, in cases of appeals, what is the experience of the court. Will you take a period and show how many appeals were made, and in how many were the convictions confirmed, modified or quashed ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : We will give the information to the best of our ability.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**(RAILWAYS)****Fourteenth Meeting**

DELHI

Friday, 8th November 1929.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY, (*Chairman*).The Right Hon'ble V. S. SRINIVASA  
SASTRI, P. C.

Sir VICTOR SASOON, BART.

Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, Kt.,  
K.C.S.I., C.I.E.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E. }

Lt.-Col. H. A. J. GIDNEY, M.L.A. }

Rai Sahib CHANDRIKA PRASAD. }

Mr. S. LALI, I.C.S. }

Mr. A. DIBDIN. }

Mr. G. D. BIRLA, M.L.A.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

Diwan CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S., (*Medical Assessor*).*Assistant Commissioners.**Joint Secretaries.*

**Mr. T. G. RUSSELL**, Chief Commissioner, Railways ; **Mr. A. A. L. PARSONS**, C.I.E., I.C.S., Financial Commissioner ; **Mr. A. M. HAYMAN**, O.B.E., Member and **Mr. H. A. M. HANNAY**, Member, on behalf of the Railway Board re-called and further examined.

K-1193. *Mr. Cliff* : With regard to measures for the settlement and prevention of trade disputes, it is stated in memorandum of the Railway Board : " The question of providing a suitable and efficient machinery for the prevention and settlement of disputes on railways has accordingly engaged the consideration of the Government of India and the Railway Board in recent years. The Trade Disputes Act passed by the Legislature in March last is a logical corollary to the Trade Unions Act which preceded it a few years ago." I wanted to find out if I could whether the Railway Board have a policy for dealing with matters arising out of employment of the work-people before that stage is reached. Might I put it this way : Sir George Rainy received a deputation. I should like to find out whether the Railway Board has considered the question of sitting, if need be, informally with the All-India Railwaymen's Federation from time to time, taking them into association and letting them see that they



share in some measure in the settlement of the questions which vitally affect them ?—(*Mr. Russell*). So far we have not considered the question of informal discussion with the Railwaymen's Federation. Consultations so far have been left to our Agents, the Managers, with their own unions.

*Mr. Cliff* : Might I suggest that as far as the Agents are concerned, in the first instance, and then as far as the Railway Board are concerned, in the second instance, consideration might be given as to whether there should be more frequent opportunities for consultation and for taking the view of the people whom your decisions most materially affect.

*The Chairman* : Your suggestion, Mr. Cliff, is a yearly or half-yearly meeting.

*Mr. Cliff* : As far as the Railway Board is concerned, I would suggest that at the moment there is a favourable opportunity to indicate what has been done with respect to the representation which they made, but as far as the Agents are concerned, that is a matter which they would evolve. Might I illustrate my point with reference to evidence given yesterday by a witness who said : " I was not allowed by certain rules to recognize a given union ; but I met them informally, and when I met them informally I found that they put forward a point of view which I had never recognized, and as a result of that representation I was able to do something which was to their advantage." I want to find out whether the Railway Board are prepared to place themselves in the like position with the railway trade unions.

*The witness (Mr. Russell)* : I am afraid I am not prepared to go so far as that. We certainly will ask the Agents to get into closer touch with the unions, but I am not prepared for the present to say that we will centralize so much that we will issue orders from here to all railways regarding this.

K-1194. May I ask whether you are prepared to encourage this to the fullest extent of your powers ?—We are prepared to recommend to the Agents that they should get into closer touch with their unions.

K-1195. May I take one instance in order to test this. Mr. Hayman has told the Commission that the Railway Board has addressed itself to deal with some of the problems which were represented to them last May ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Most of them, I think.

K-1196. Do you not think it would be wise that in some way or other—preferably by personal consultation—either the Railway Board or the Labour Member of the Board should meet the people whom you met on previous occasions and take them into your confidence ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : At the moment we will say that we are prepared to consider that suggestion of yours.

K-1197. Would you just help me in regard to this : what is your conception of the meaning of ' recognition ' given to trade unions by the Railway Board ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : It does not affect the Railway Board.

K-1198. I think I see a stage coming when it will affect the Railway Board rather materially. As far as I can see with regard to railways, the conception of recognition varies very considerably, but I presume the Railway Board have considered that ?—I am afraid I do not quite follow exactly what you mean.

K-1199. I notice in reading some of the memoranda that recognition to one Agent means a totally different thing from what it means to another Agent. Has the Railway Board really laid down what recognition of Railway trade unions entails upon the union and upon the Agent?—Only on very general lines.

K-1200. I do not know whether you can help me now on another matter; can you furnish the Commission with any statement regarding sickness on railways?—Will you see the statement in the Railway Board memorandum, Chapter IV.

K-1201. *The Chairman*: You have in the first column the percentage of certificates issued and then the percentage of sick leave granted. Is it the percentage of the total personnel?—(*Mr. Hayman*): Of the total number under those different classes. The statistics are divided under three classes: staff drawing Rs. 250 and over; staff drawing Rs. 30 to Rs. 250, and staff drawing less than Rs. 30. The percentages are on the total number of each of those different classes of staff.

K-1202. *The Chairman*: But where you have supplied percentage of certificates issued as 4.10, that means of the total number employed?—Of every 100.

K-1203. *Mr. Cliff*: 4.10 is the percentage of the certificates issued. In the next column we have the average percentage of sick leave granted, i.e., 1.67. What is the difference between these figures?—A man may be absent for a day or two and may be given leave other than what is technically called sick leave. That would bring about a difference.

K-1204. So that really if you take the first column and you want to know the number of staff who were sick even for a day or two, that is 4.10?—To be perfectly fair to you I would not say that is necessarily the full answer to the question, because a person might fall sick for a day or two and write to his officer and say 'I am not well and I cannot come to work for a day or two'. The officer may allow him to remain absent for a day or two without requiring him to get a certificate. There are cases in which that is done; we do not necessarily compel a man to get a certificate.

K-1205. Take the division into three different grades. Are each of these grades paid during sickness?—All men who get leave on medical certificate would get pay on sickness except a certain class of employees who are on daily rated pay.

K-1206. Is it a general rule that daily-rated men do not get sick pay now?—With a few exceptions, the workmen in our workshops get about 15 days leave in a year on full pay and no more; so that if a man happens to be ill for more than 15 days, he will not get pay for those days; but I ought to explain that in the new leave rules that we have drawn up, we are working towards the grant of more liberal leave to the workshop employees and definitely the grant of a liberal amount of leave on medical certificate to those who have put in a certain minimum amount of service.

K-1207. Is that 15 days' leave or 15 days' sick leave?—Total leave of all kinds at the present moment.

K-1208. Do these figures include a number of staff who have not received sick pay?—A fair number.

K-1209. *Mr. Ahmed* : I shall confine myself to asking a few questions with regard to poorly paid manual labourers. I hope that it will be found that these questions can be answered in a few words. You remember that last time I asked you with regard to decreasing the indebtedness among manual labourers. In your memorandum you deal with co-operative credit societies and co-operative stores, and I understand you are in favour of that. Are you desirous of taking steps to increase the number of co-operative societies and co-operative stores on the lines ?—Not necessarily ; I could not put it quite like that ; we could not take steps to increase the number ; but it is our desire to extend the business and make it touch the class of staff to which you refer.

K-1210. You state that this movement has been successful ; you are satisfied with what it has done and you feel that it has improved the position of these workers ?—We are in favour of extending the business and bringing it into touch with the class of establishment to which you refer.

K-1211. Therefore I presume you are in favour of increasing the number of such societies and concerns ?—We are not prepared to commit ourselves to that. If a railway has a co-operative credit society that society can probably do all the business which is required if the people will come forward and make use of it. It does not necessarily follow that another society is required at that particular place, or on that particular railway.

K-1212. *The Chairman* : You want to strengthen and extend the existing societies ?—Yes, and to touch the class of staff to which Mr. Ahmed refers.

K-1213. And bring in the lower paid men ?—Yes.

K-1214. *Mr. Ahmed* : You know that in this country there is constant unemployment. A great deal of catering is done by the railways themselves and at prices lower than the prices of contractors such as Messrs. Kellner & Co., or Messrs. Brandon & Co., and Messrs. Spencer & Co. ?—(*Mr. Hannay*) : You say prices are lower ; I doubt it.

K-1215. When a railway do the catering themselves they charge, for instance, 6 annas for tea and bread and butter or toast, while the contractors charge at least 8 annas. The same is true, is it not, with regard to the price of dinners also Rs. 3 or less by the railway and Rs. 3½ and more by the contractors ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I do not think that is a fact.

K-1216. Is not that so ; for instance, on the Bengal Nagpur Railway ?—I think it is correct that the rates of dining cars on the Bengal Nagpur Railway are slightly lower than the rates on the other railways.

K-1217. I understand you are in favour of the catering being in the hands of the railways themselves rather than in the hands of contractors because your railways are run on a commercial basis.—Our policy is to try to give the best service to the public we can at the least cost.

K-1217a. Then will you follow the example of the Bengal Nagpur Railway without giving further extension of terms to the contractors ?

*The Chairman* : I take it that that is a matter which you will leave to the individual railways.—Yes.

K-1218. *Mr. Ahmed* : I presume you desire to copy the methods adopted in the West amongst more prosperous nations. You have a Rates Committee and the Railway Board deals with that subject. Are you in favour of reducing the rates for carrying salt from the Khewra mines to

Calcutta ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : If a reduction of the rates is likely to increase the traffic sufficiently to give us an increase in net revenue.

K-1219. I take it that the same answer applies to the small coal mine near Karachi ?—The principle applies generally ; I do not know anything about the details of the mine at Karachi, but the principle would apply equally.

K-1220. I suppose you are aware of the statements which have been made with regard to a reduction of charges for the carriage of coal from the Khewra coal mine and you are, no doubt, prepared to consider the matter ?—(*Mr. Hannay*) : As far as I know we have not anything of that sort before us.

K-1221. I suppose you read the speeches which are delivered in the Legislative Assembly, I am referring particularly to what has been said by the members representing Madras ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I was not there last Session and I do not recollect the subject being raised previously. (*Mr. Hayman*) : We promise to look into that.

K-1222. From your memorandum, I see that certain labour employed in the coal areas is managed by you ; I am referring to Bhurkunda, Kargali, Bokaro and Giridih. At those places there are Government collieries which are managed by the Chief Mining Engineer, the Railway Board and the Agent of the East Indian Railway, the central office being at Calcutta. You utilize the services of a lot of labour there ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : That is right.

K-1223. You also make use of their services to bring the coal to the wagons. Having regard to the low wages which are paid to that labour, are you prepared to pay them higher wages because the Indian collieries are ready and willing to pay a little more ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Where we employ the labour ourselves we will certainly make an examination into the question of the adequacy of the rates we pay.

K-1224. Do you engage that labour through contractors ?—Some of the labour is direct labour, but I think a large proportion is labour engaged through contractors. Where we engage the labour ourselves, we give you an undertaking to look into the question of the adequacy of the labour rates.

K-1225. But will you look into the interests of the labour which is engaged through contractors for conveying coal to the wagons ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I do not think we can commit ourselves to going into that question.

K-1226. May I take it that you are not concerned from the point of view of labour ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We have to enter into a contract with the contractor to do certain work for a certain sum of money ; we cannot force him to pay particular rates to his workmen ; but if we do pay our workmen who work in or near the same place a wage which is higher than the wage that a contractor pays, probably the contractor will be forced to pay a similar wage. I do not think the Chief Commissioner will commit himself to any statement with regard to that.

K-1227. Do you pay lower wages to labour engaged in bringing coal from the mines to the wagons ?—(*Mr. Hannay*) . The usual thing is for the loading contractor to be paid an inclusive rate by the tub loaded into wagons.

K-1228 Do you pay at a rate much lower than is paid by the Indian coal mines ?—I do not think we do.

K-1229. Possibly you do not know.—(*Mr. Hannay*) : I know a certain amount about these parts. (*Mr. Russell*) : Our information I think is that we do not pay a lower wage than the Indian mine owners.

K-1230. But you do it through contractors ; the contractors make a certain profit, otherwise why should they come in ? That is common sense ?—That is common sense ; we are quite sure the contractors would not come in except at a profit. I accept the statement that a contractor would not be a contractor if he could not make some profit.

K-1231. The Indian colliery owners employ labour directly ; the contractors do not make any profit and therefore the owners can afford to pay a higher rate of wages to the labourers ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I do not accept that.

K-1232. Is it not a fact that you do not accept tenders for coal from private firms generally but you accept tenders from a selected few ?—I do not quite follow, but if you mean that we show preference to certain companies in placing our contracts for coal, I can say straight away that this is quite untrue.

K-1233. But as a matter of fact there have been complaints with regard to your Department in the Press and on the platform.

*The Chairman* : That really is not within the scope of our enquiry.

K-1234. *Mr. Ahmed* : I venture to think with great respect that it is relevant to the labour question. I am not dealing with the highly paid staff, I am confining my attention to the poor labourers. You remember you said last time that you did not mind recognizing certain unions. As a matter of fact on the E. I. Railway, the B., B. and C. I. Railway and the E. B. Railway there are two unions on each line and even only, for instance at Kanchrapara with 376 members they are officially recognized.—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Then that is something to our credit.

K-1235. Have you seen a copy of the letter dated 6th September 1929, sent by the N. W. Ry. General Workers' Union to the Agent of that Railway ? Are you in favour of its recognition ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I would say that the question would be fully considered and dealt with on its merits.

K-1236. *Sir Alexander Murray* : In your supplementary statement, dealing with the question of costs, you say that between 1914 and 1928-29, taking into account labour, that is all the employees except supervisory and clerical staff, the weighted percentage rise in wages is approximately 124 per cent. That is after taking into account the increase of 26 per cent. in numbers.—Yes, that is so.

K-1237. This seems to be big advance in wages seeing that elsewhere in your statement it is indicated that the general rise in prices was anything from 35 to 100 per cent. The Bombay cost of living index figures really show nothing higher than 93 per cent. It was 93 per cent. in October 1920 over what it was pre-war. That is the highest figure I can get ; at the present moment it is only 49 per cent. Yet the wages of the employees have risen by 124 per cent. Are you quite sure that the figures are correct ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We have explained that the compiled accounts which we have in the Railway Board's Office here give us the total wages bill as for all classes of establishments. That was included in our memorandum at the time we prepared it. We ourselves recognized that it would be more helpful to the Commission if we separated the figures so as to give you only labour figures. After we came here, both you yourself and Sir Victor Sassoon indicated in a conversation with Sir

George Rainy that you would like to have the figures so separated. I spent considerable time in taking out the detailed accounts that come from the railway administrations and separating the figures into two parts. I think it will prove to be substantially correct, and on that separation I came to the conclusion that the rise in the cost of establishments which may be classed as labour, was in the neighbourhood of 120 to 125 per cent. We have written particularly to the Commission and said that we were getting accurate figures from the railway administrations and would supply them to the Commission later on. I would like to make one observation with reference to the remarks just now made. I think you wanted to contrast the rise in prices with the rise in the wages that we pay. Unfortunately we have not in our records anything that we can take up definitely to ascertain the rise in the cost of living by taking the rise in prices of particular commodities, and weighting them with reference to the amount of those commodities which the labourer has consumed bringing about the rise in the cost of living, so that we can compare the percentage rise in wages with the percentage rise in the cost of living. But a broad comparison will indicate that we have been on the whole generous ; also perhaps we have rectified what might have been a genuine complaint in 1913-14, that in some classes the minimum wage that we paid was too low.

K-1238. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : You have raised the base of a number of lower paid employees and that is what has raised the total figure.—True, but I should not like that to be taken as a general explanation relating to all classes. It is some classes here and there on all railways.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : That is, one of the factors has brought the average up.

K-1239. *Sir Alexander Murray* : On the figures before us the overhead rate of increase is about 124 per cent. That would seem to bear out what Mr. Heseltine found in his enquiry in 1922 and what the Railway Board themselves state in their memorandum, *i.e.*, that the wages paid to the railway employees are better than those paid to the Government employees in the provinces.—There is no question about that.

K-1240. In the statement you say that 45 to 55 per cent. of the operating expenses may be taken as being wages. That I take it excludes the supervisory and clerical staff ?—No, it includes that.

*Mr. Cliff* : Sir Alexander, would you find out whether this 45 to 55 per cent. has really increased by 124 per cent. over 1914 ?

K-1241. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You said that the percentage rise in the operating cost per ton-mile and per passenger-mile included this rise of 124 per cent. in wages, and that 50 to 55 per cent. of the operating cost might be taken to be overhead charges. You say in this statement that your overhead operating costs have gone up by 50 to 55 per cent. Does that include the 124 per cent. rise in wages ?—That is so. It might appear that there is some inconsistency. I think that was in your mind when you raised the question of comparing the 124 per cent. rise in wages with the 50 to 55 per cent rise in operating expenses.

K-1242. That is so.—I will just give you some explanation of that. In the first instance you have to find out what increase there has been in the volume of work that has been handled. With regard to that we have a difficulty, because we have very varying factors of volumes of work like passenger-miles, goods ton-miles, gross ton-miles and coaching unit miles. You can only work out a correct formula, by reducing all these to one common unit. We have not yet reached that stage on the Indian railways, and I think many railways in other countries too have not reached that stage when they could get a common unit by equating all these other units. I happened to know you were going to ask this question and I spent considerable time trying to work out roughly a common unit.

K-1243. Ton-miles and passenger-miles must have increased a great deal since 1913-14.—I will give you the figures. To assist you I made a rough examination of these matters. We must first of all take a basic year and the basic figures in that year before we proceed to calculate the percentage rise. I took 1913-14 as the basic year in which the volume of work done is taken as 100 and the basic rate of working expenses is also taken as 100. We must take the total working expenses that will move that volume of traffic. The basic figures were 100 for each in 1913-14, i.e., the volume of work and the total working expenses to move that volume of work. The working expenses are a definite figure and my investigations showed that they were 100 in 1913-14 and they were 224 in 1928-29, an increase of 124 per cent.

K-1244. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : That is only for wages.—It happens that the two figures coincide. But they are not exactly the same. They are two different things and they are not really coincident for this reason. In arriving at the figure of 125 as increase in wages, we have cut out the 26 per cent. increase in numbers, whereas in the working expenses we take the total expenses for the two years referred to. And they compare as 1-2-24. Coming to the volume of traffic I have explained I can only get at a rough figure because of these difficulties of equating the various classes of work to one common unit. By that calculation I found that if 100 was the volume of traffic which was carried in 1913-14, 145 was the volume of traffic which was carried in 1928-29, an increase of 45 per cent.

K-1245. While your volume of work increased by 45 per cent. your operating cost has gone up by 124 per cent.—Coming to the increase in operating cost I find this. Dividing the working expenses by the volume of traffic moved, I find that for 1913-14 the operating cost was 100|100 or 1, whereas for 1928-29 it was 224|145 or 1.5 nearly. Therefore the operating cost has increased by 50 per cent.

K-1246. *Sir Alexander Murray* : That has been very interesting. But there is one other thing. The efficiency of both the railway plant and the railway employees must have increased considerably. You must have installed up-to-date plant ?—Yes, we claim that.

K-1247. Have you figures corresponding to the G. I. P. Ry. figures with regard to efficiency, for other railways ? They are very interesting and speak volumes.—There are things in our Administration Reports for different years which will also speak volumes. If you would like to have a considered memorandum on that I hope Mr. Russell will undertake to supply the Commission with it.

K-1248. Thank you, that is what I wanted to get, to show the operating efficiency between the G. I. P. and other railways ; because they are interesting figures. They show that during the Railway Board's tenure, efficiency has risen generally on the Indian Railways. With regard to standardization you seem to have come to the opinion that it is not possible to standardize all railway wages ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Quite impossible.

K-1249. It is not possible to standardize all the wages on one particular railway ?—I think it is not possible either.

K-1250. Take the North-Western Railway running from Karachi to Khyber, or the East Indian Railway running from Calcutta to Delhi. Is it not possible to have basic rates of pay ?—Absolutely impossible.

K-1250a. What about the East Indian Railway running from Calcutta to Delhi ? Is it not possible even there ?—It is not possible.

K-1251. *Mr. Clow* : In your memorandum it is stated : “ On the East Indian Railway there are certain districts through which the railway passes, which have surplus labourers suitable for work on railways and the majority of its menial employees come from those districts.” What are those districts particularly ?—(*Mr. Hannay*) : I think Bihar.

K-1252. Main line districts in Bihar ?—Not only the main line districts, I imagine. There are certain classes of staff which are recruited from near Buxar, Arrah district and from Shahpur. The mining labour is recruited mostly from Chota-Nagpur.—(*Mr. Russell*) : The East Indian Railway themselves will give you the correct information.

K-1253. We have not their memorandum here.—You will have it in a week.

K-1254. As regards indebtedness, under the existing law, half the pay of the employee is attached as soon as an order is received from the court.—That is so.

K-1255. Have you considered what would be the effect on indebtedness if the law were modified so as to exempt the railways altogether from this, or to reduce the amount that could be attached ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : Presumably a higher rate of interest would be charged on loans.

K-1256. In the long run would it be for the benefit of the men ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I should be very dubious of its benefits.

K-1257. Has that question not been raised by any Agent, at any time and considered by you ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : No, not in my long experience in the Railway Board Office.

K-1258. *Mr. Joshi* : *Mr. Russell*, you have promised to give a statement as to how in practice as it is said you keep up racial discrimination in promotions. Coming to housing, can you say that you do not provide more houses to Europeans and Anglo-Indians than to Indians in proportion to their number ?—(*Mr. Mayman*) : The policy of the Railway Board, which it took up at least ten years ago has been to build quarters for railway employees only on the basis of posts and irrespective of whether the holder of the post belonged to one community or the other.

K-1259. *The Chairman* : You mean grades ?—Or grades. For instance we build quarters for Station Masters or for particular grades, and not for communities.

K-1260. That may be the general policy. I want to know what is the fact. Am I correct in saying that although your policy is to build according to grades, it so happens on account of your practice that in proportion



to their numbers Europeans and Anglo-Indians have more houses than Indians.—(*Mr. Hayman*) : That would not be a correct way of describing the position. At the present moment due to past conditions there is a proportionately larger number of Europeans and Anglo-Indians in particular classes for which classes quarters are provided. So that if you go round just now, it will appear to you in respect of those classes that more quarters are provided for one community than for another.

K-1261. *The Chairman* : That is the consequence of the policy of building by grades ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : It is not only due to the policy of the past, but also due to the facts of the past.

K-1262. *Mr. Clow* : It is not a consequence of the present policy ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : The policy introduced some years ago of removal of racial discrimination and larger employment of Indians will gradually alter the position.

K-1263. *Mr. Joshi* : I have got the facts ?—You had the facts before.

K-1264. Taking Indians, Europeans and Anglo-Indians of the same grade, does it not happen that the floor space provided for European houses is greater than the floor space given to Indian houses ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : The houses are built by grades. It has nothing to do with their occupants.

K-1265. Have you not a type for European and Anglo-Indian employees and a separate type for Indians ?—We have done that in the past.

K-1266. But have you done away with it now ?—Yes. We have only one type for Indians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans, on the basis of grades.

K-1267. One of the unions in Lahore complained that you provided electricity for European quarters, but did not provide it for Indian quarters ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I understand from Mr. Gregory that that was the case on the N. W. Ry. some years ago, but at the present moment electricity is given to classes of quarters without reference to the communities occupying them.

K-1268. I visited Khargpur less than two years ago. I found there that electricity was provided for the European part of the town, but not for the Indian part.—You just asked me a question about the N.-W. Ry. I could have answered that question straight off. But I took care to verify my answer from Mr. Gregory before I gave it. I have not been to Khargpur recently and I am not in a position to answer your question about Khargpur.

K-1269. You do not know about that ?—I have not been there recently.

K-1270. With regard to free passes for railway employees, is it a fact that on the G. I. P. Railway Europeans and Anglo-Indians get a second class pass irrespective of their grades, while that is not so in the case of Indians ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : That was the case in the old days. But all that has been done away with now, and the same rules apply to all.

K-1271. Since what time ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : About six months ago.

K-1272. Is it a fact that fines funds are more used in aid of European and Anglo-Indian institutes and hospitals than of Indian institutes and hospitals ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Certainly not in the case of hospitals. As

far as I know all hospitals are open to Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians, and have been so for years. I do not think there is any distinction in the case of hospitals.

K-1273. I put a general question and gave hospitals only as an illustration.—(*Mr. Russell*) : It may be that the total sum spent in the past on European and Anglo-Indian institutes was more than in the case of Indian institutes. I am only speaking generally. But you will find that during the last few years Indian institutes have got quite as much, if not probably more than European and Anglo-Indian institutes.

K-1274. Do you propose to appoint a committee for the management of fines funds and welfare funds ?—Yes.

K-1275. Will you take steps to see that the employees are represented on that committee in proportion to their numbers ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We will fully consider the suggestion.

K-1276. I want your decision ?—We have not considered that. Mr. Parsons has already explained the position.

K-1277. You have proposed to appoint a committee and I want to know whether the employees will have representation.—(*Mr. Parsons*) : As I explained on the last occasion when we appeared before the Commission we have not yet come to a decision on that proposal though we ourselves view it favourably. If therefore we ourselves have not come to a definite decision whether a committee should be formed, equally of course we cannot say exactly how that committee should be formed. We are perfectly willing to consider, if a committee is appointed on any railway, or committees on all railways, whether representation on that committee should not be roughly proportionate to the numbers of employees for whose welfare these funds are to be devoted.

K-1278. As regards institutes, you said that you did not start institutes for Indians because they did not feel sufficiently interested in them. I find that on the North Western Railway there are comparatively speaking more members in Indian institutes than in European Institutes. While there are 32 European institutes with a membership of 1861, there are 19 Indian institutes with a membership of 3,600. So that, I think Indians have shown greater interest in these institutes—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Only recently, but not in the old days. (*Mr. Russell*) : I said that in the past institutes were not started for Indians, because they were not sufficiently interested in that sort of thing. I do not think that is a fact now.

K-1279. Will you arrange your programme of building institutes in such a way that Indians will get a sufficient number of institutes very soon ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Our policy is to encourage Indian institutes and the Agents have been told that.

K-1280. You cannot say that within five years time you will be able to provide a sufficient number of institutes for Indians as they are lacking very much in them ?—I cannot say that it will be done in five years.

K-1281. In recruiting Indians you generally insist upon the standard of matriculation for grades where a knowledge of English is necessary and for Europeans and Anglo-Indians you are satisfied with a lower standard, namely the 6th standard ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : In a letter which we have issued to railway administrations we have distinctly given these

instructions : “ Whatever the qualifications considered necessary in order to justify the recruitment of a candidate to a particular branch of service may be, they must be the same for all communities ”.

K-1282. Perhaps the North-Western Railway have not yet obeyed your instructions because they state in their memorandum that they recruit Europeans and Anglo-Indians from the sixth standard while in the case of Indians they expect a standard of matriculation ?—We will have the matter investigated.

K-1283. Have you explained anywhere what your new scheme regarding hours of work is ? Does it increase the hours of work in the case of some employees—In the case of certain classes of employees who work continuously now, that is, seven days in a week, they are to be given 24 hours period of rest in any week, and it becomes necessary in certain cases to require them to work extra number of hours on the sixth day of the week. Roughly speaking, to those employees the maximum amount would be  $1\frac{1}{3}$  ; that is, you take away 8 hours and distribute it among the other six days ; so you would get  $1\frac{1}{3}$  extra hours a day. But where in any case we find that by imposing this extra work on particular people we require them to work on a basis that will be a strain we put in extra establishment.

K-1284. Is that scheme fully explained anywhere in your memorandum ?—The scheme is not fully explained there, because at the moment it is part of business that is to be examined by the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly.

K-1285. I understood you or Mr. Parsons to say that you will be quite prepared to discuss the scheme with the railway unions ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I do not think I made any statement like that.

K-1286. Will you be ready to discuss the scheme with the All-India Railwaymen's Federation ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We will be prepared to consider the suggestion that you make.

K-1287. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : That is what you said before ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : What I said was that of the various matters which you then mentioned there might be some which we would be prepared to discuss with representatives of unions but not all of them. But in any case we cannot give an undertaking in this respect.

K-1288. *Mr. Joshi* : May I know why the whole scheme should not be discussed with the railway unions ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : At the moment the whole matter is before the Government of India and as such I am afraid I cannot express any opinion.

K-1289. I want to know the reasons why it should not be done ?—As I have already said, we will consider whether we could do so or not.

K-1290. As regards the hours of work, it was stated that the running staff work a little more than they should. Did you consider the question whether there should be no regulation of the hours of work on railways, especially of the running staff, from the point of view of the safety of passengers ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : The question of safety of passengers has always been before the railway administration.

K-1291. Did you come to the conclusion that there should be no regulation of hours on railways by legislation ?—You mean in relation to the Washington and Geneva Conventions ?

K-1292. Both in relation to the Washington and Geneva Conventions as well as to the safety of passengers ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : As Mr. Russell has explained, so far as the question of safety of the travelling public is concerned, the matter is one which has always been before the railway administrations, but I cannot remember whether any administration considered the question of regulating the hours of work of the running staff from the point of view of providing it in the law. We have just now excluded the running staff temporarily from our proposals to give effect to the principles of the Washington and Geneva Conventions, but that does not necessarily mean that we are going to keep the running staff out of it all the time. The matter is full of difficulties because it touches amongst other things the amount of money that these men earn. We want to have a full and careful investigation into the question before we decide whether those principles should be made applicable entirely to the running staff and should form part of the law. If they are to be made applicable to them we might have to provide, as in the case of some other classes of staff, for some modifications.

K-1293. It has been the practice of some of the railway administrations now to give work even in their own workshops on contract. Do you insist upon any fair wages clause in your contract ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : We do not lay down any scale of wages for contractors.

K-1294. Do you put in a general clause that the conditions shall be fair, as in England they have got a general fair wages clause inserted in all Government contracts ?—In a big contract the only clause we do put in is about sanitary conditions, housing and medical attendance.

K-1295. As regards minimum wages, I find that in spite of your generosity there are people who still get Rs. 7, 8 or 9. Now, in the case of such workmen will you be willing to have some minimum wage fixed by a machinery established by Government ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : That is not a question, I am afraid, to which we can give an answer here and now. As we explained at the beginning of our examination, this question of fixing a minimum wage by law is under the consideration of another Department of the Government of India, and I fear we cannot give expression to our opinion at present about it.

K-1296. This is one of the questions on which the Commission wants information and explanation. This is one of the subjects on which the Commission will have to make recommendations. Will you help us ?—As I have already explained, the question has been referred by the Department of Industries and Labour of the Government of India to all Provincial Governments.

K-1297. Have you considered the question whether it will not be proper for you to convert the daily rated men who work for 3, 5, 10 or 20 years into permanent men after a certain period of service ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : That matter is under very active consideration. Perhaps you would be glad to learn that in the Lillooah workshops, orders converting the daily rated men into monthly paid men have only very recently been issued.

K-1298. You have taken up that question but you cannot give any definite decision as regards its general extension ?—Not just at the moment.

K-1299. Would you explain to me why in the case of the daily rated men who work in your workshops for 5 or 10 years you should deny to them certain concessions which are given to permanent men ?—That point is under consideration in the proposal that we are examining at the present moment.

K-1300. You have certain periodical medical examinations ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Yes, it is principally the eye test for the running staff who are responsible for the safety of the public ; they are tested regularly.

K-1301. Have you any objection if it is suggested that the medical test should be by a board of doctors amongst whom there should be one of your doctors and one selected by the workmen themselves ?—I think we must insist on running our business in our own way, and our doctors are fully qualified to give an opinion whether a man's eye-sight is up to the necessary standard or not.

*Mr. Joshi* : I do not mean to suggest that your doctors are not fully qualified, but if you take human nature into consideration the employee is not satisfied with the decision of your doctor ; if he is to be satisfied, you should have a board of doctors amongst whom there will be one selected by the employees themselves whom the employees will pay ; you need not pay him.

K-1302. *Mr. Cliff* : Will the Railway Board tell us if any case is in dispute it goes before an independent tribunal ?—(*Mr. Hanny*) : No ; but it can go to the Chief Medical Officer who is the head of the Department.

*Mr. Cliff* : There are systems in operation in other countries, *Mr. Chairman*, whereby, by agreement with the unions and employers, the workers are examined by the employers' doctors, but if there is a dispute the case is referred to a specialist to be agreed to by both the parties.

K-1303. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : What objection have you for having a board of doctors ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : As things are in India, on every occasion when one of our railway doctors holds a man's eye-sight to be below the required standard there would be a dispute and an appeal to the board.

K-1304. You can fix a certain fee to be paid if it was decided against him ?—It would certainly be said that the employer should share the cost.

K-1305. *Mr. Joshi* : *Mr. Russell*, you said that standardization of wages is not possible. Do you mean that full standardization is not possible or no standardization is possible ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Standardization might be possible in very small areas ; whether it would be of very much use or not I do not know.

K-1306. You take a place like Calcutta or Raichur where 2 or 3 railways meet. It is obvious that there is cause for discontent when each railway pays differently and the disparity is really very great. 'Cannot a standardization take place in Calcutta or in other common centres where two or more railways meet ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : If you take the general effect on the basis that you have referred, that is on particular points, there is standardization. Let me give you an illustration. Why go as far as Raichur ; let us take Delhi which every body knows. Although Delhi is a junction for five railways, it is worked by one administration ; all the employees doing the same class of work therefore get a uniform wage. In

olden times when Delhi had staff belonging to two or three railways there was always a pressure which, I think, had to be yielded to, by all the employees doing exactly the same class of work with equal responsibility to get the same rate of pay.

K-1307. That is a case of coercion. I am suggesting whether you should not do it yourself instead of waiting for the pressure from the workers ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I think I am correct in saying that as far as the workshops are concerned there is standardization, at any rate both the B., B. and C. I. Railway and the G. I. P. Railway pay exactly the same wage for the same type of work ; I think there is absolute standardization there.

K-1308. I find there is a great disparity between the M. S. M. Railway staff and the G. I. P. Railway staff at Raichur ?—I am not aware of that ; the station itself belongs to the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Co.

K-1309. There is G. I. P. Railway also ?—Yes, but they only run into it.

K-1310. As regards security of service, I think Mr. Parsons stated that you have some proposals regarding the question of dismissals and discharges. Will you explain what your proposals are ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We are endeavouring to lay down a procedure which will give an opportunity to every man who has put in a reasonable amount of service to get an inquiry made into his case on certain prescribed lines before the officer who is competent to discharge him can pass an order of discharge.

K-1311. In which the union will be able to represent the man ?—We have not brought the union into the matter at all.

K-1312. Have you any objection to bring in the union ?—Yes.

K-1313. Will you explain what that objection is ?—In order to run our railways properly we and our officers must take administrative and executive decisions ourselves. If we find that a man is guilty of some offence the officer who is charged with the responsibility of administering that section or branch has got to take his decision but we want to lay down a procedure which will ensure that there is a complete examination into the facts of the case. We do not consider it necessary that we should bring in the trade union into the matter at all.

K-1314. Do you not think that you should give a proper hearing to the man who is to be dismissed ?—Our new rules work towards that end.

K-1315. How ?—By giving the man a charge-sheet ; if he is an illiterate man, the officer or the senior subordinate has orders to explain the charge to him and to help him to write his defence.

K-1316. Suppose the man says that he would like to be heard by his union representatives ?—It is for him then to go to ask the union representatives to hear him.

K-1317. Have you any objection to that ?—We have an objection to bring in the unions at that stage.

K-1318. At what stage ?—At the stage when the executive or the administrative officer has to deal with the alleged offence.

K-1319. If the man is anxious that he should be heard through the union representatives and if you object to the union representatives being heard, you really do not give sufficient hearing to the man ?—That is a question of opinion.

K-1320. It may be a question of opinion, but it seems to me that your rules must provide for a proper hearing of the man ?—They do.

K-1321. In your opinion they do ?—Yes.

K-1322. *Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : Do the Railway Board think that the salary of Rs. 7, 8, 9 or up to Rs. 30 per month allowed to the "important classes of railway servants other than workshop employees" is a living wage for a man, his wife and two children to give them wholesome food, clothing, housing, education, medical aid and a moderate provision for sickness, etc.?—May I ask you to point out cases where a wage of Rs. 7 is paid ? If there are such cases, I think the Chief Commissioner will undertake to examine such cases to see whether the wage should not be raised.

K-1323. From Appendix D to your memorandum you will see that there are such cases on the Bengal and North-Western Railway.—As I have explained, those wages are paid only in one railway because it passes through the cheapest part of this country.

K-1324. May I know whether the Railway Board approve of these rates and whether they give a living wage ?—It was explained by, I think, Mr. Parsons, on the first day of our examination, that we could not force particular rates of wages on our company-worked railways, and therefore I cannot say, in answer to you, that we are going to force Companies, particularly the Bengal and North-Western Railway to raise their wages. But we do suggest to the Bengal and North-Western Railway as we do to the other railways, whenever we find that the wage on the face of it looks inadequate, to take steps to examine whether it is really inadequate or not. We have only very recently asked the Bengal and North-Western Railway to examine some of their rates which on the face of them look low. I am glad to say that the Bengal and North-Western Railway only a few days ago gave me a list of a number of classes in which they are increasing the minimum wage. They had examined some of these cases of their own motion.

K-1325. I am glad to hear that, but I want to know whether the Railway Board consider that anything below Rs. 30 or 35 is a minimum living wage ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : There is no doubt that in many parts of the country very much less than Rs. 30 is a living wage.

K-1326. Do the high officials, who get salaries of three and four figures, not find their salaries inadequate and yet Indian employees are kept on Rs. 7 to Rs. 30 ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : That is a general complaint all over the world.

K-1327. My question is a plain one. I see that a large number of Indian employees on the railways are starving and their physical condition is deteriorating ; they are dying for want of nourishment and care, and yet the Railway Board think that the wage given is a living wage. Is the remuneration of higher grade railway servants based on consideration of





namely, that a working servant is not to be discharged or dismissed without giving him an opportunity to explain his position and without the reasons for his discharge being recorded ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I think I explained fairly fully in answer to Mr. Joshi that we are doing everything possible to give an individual an absolutely fair chance, and to have an inquiry made into the alleged offence against him provided he is a man over a certain number of year's service. We are taking every care to see that he is properly represented in the Department and that an appeal by him against any order passed against him is carefully and properly dealt with. Beyond that we are not prepared to go. We cannot agree to the man being represented by any union. We are not prepared to have our procedure modelled exactly on the lines of Government servants in other Departments of the Government of India for whom the civil service regulation rules apply, firstly, because the basis of their employment is in most cases different, and secondly because most of the Government servants are pensionable while our employees are non-pensionable. We must work our lines in a way which approximate more closely to the working of commercial concerns ; besides that, we have to work strictly in matters of discipline and efficiency because we are responsible for the safety of the travelling public.

K-1337. Government have laid down certain rules for the protection of Government servants. As railway servants are also Government servants I claim the same protection for the railway servants as is laid down for Government servants ?—We have laid down certain rules which provide what we consider to be full protection in the matters referred to.

K-1338. Will the Railway Board consider the desirability of establishing a combined railway school and college at each centre where railway workshops are located so as to give vocational as well as technical education and training to children of railway employees of all classes, both of subordinate grades and superior ranks ? The suggestion has been before the Railway Board since the year 1920. I have explained the scheme in detail in my book "The Indian Railways".—(*Mr. Parsons*) : May I briefly explain the position ? The direct answer to the question is in the negative. The duty of providing education in this country rests chiefly with Provincial Governments and not with the Railway Board or in most cases even with the Government of India. The policy of the Railway Board, stated briefly, is to give assistance to their employees in educating their children, by direct grants, enabling them to send their children to schools and colleges established by Provincial Governments, and not in ordinary circumstances by providing those schools themselves. The policy is justified on this ground amongst others, that after all you cannot expect the railways themselves to be educational authorities responsible for the starting of educational institutions in this country.

K-1339. *The Chairman* : Your reply is that generally the responsibility is one of Government and not that of the railways ?—Generally the railways are responsible only for helping their own employees, and their help takes the form by assisting their employees to send their children to schools.

K-1340. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : In what form is the assistance given ?—Chiefly by grants.

K-1341. *The Chairman* : The other day we paid an interesting visit to a school at Lahore. I take it that that is for your own apprentices and for

men already engaged in your service ?—This policy has only recently been laid down. In the past the railways have themselves established various schools at places where the Provincial Government did not provide facilities for education.

*The Chairman* : But your general policy is that the responsibility lies with Government and not with you.

K-1342. *Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : I do not advocate the institution of railway schools for general education but for vocational education, at which all classes of railway workers may be trained specially for railway work ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We do all that is necessary towards training our employees properly. A very full account of that is given in our memorandum. This policy crystallized only a few years back ; we are extending it a great deal now and we hope in the course of time that we shall have as many schools as we consider necessary for the proper training of our employees.

K-1343. *Mr. Cliff* : That does not deal with the training of railway labour ?—It does not deal with the labourer.

K-1344. *Rai Sahib Chandrika Prasad* : As the Railway Board has decided to eliminate all racial discrimination in the railway service, and as we all desire friendly relations between Europeans and Indians, will the Railway Board be pleased to consider the desirability of throwing open to Indians the railway schools at present existing, or to be hereafter opened, at hill stations, for the children of railway employees, and at the cost of the railway ? Take, for instance, the Oakgrove School at Mussoorie ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : The Oakgrove School was established by the Board of Directors of the East Indian Railway Company specifically for the education of their European and Anglo-Indian employees. We recognize that it will require special treatment under the new policy, of which I have given a very brief account to the Commission ; but how exactly we shall treat it I am not yet certain.

K-1345. Colonel Gidney asked the other day whether Anglo-Indians have shown their readiness for railway work. Have Indians not shown a greater readiness to serve the railway than members of any other race ?—That is a matter of opinion.

K-1346. Will the Railway Board assure us that any retrenchment made in the strength of the workshop staff will not be merely with the object of obtaining from Europe the iron work which has been hitherto manufactured in the railway workshops in India ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : We can give that assurance.

K-1347. Will the Railway Board adopt a system of building entire engines and rolling stock in the Indian railway workshops, as they have been manufactured at Ajmer for the last 30 years ?—I do not think we can give an assurance on that point : it all depends on costs.—(*Mr. Parsons*) : We have recently made an enquiry into the cost of building locomotives in the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway workshop at Ajmer, which has carried out for a good many years not only the manufacture of metre gauge locomotives but also the repair of metre gauge locomotives. The result of the enquiry is by no means conclusive, but the figures suggest that they are able to manufacture metre gauge locomotives more cheaply than

they can be imported from England into India. On the other hand we are up against the fact that the cost of repairs of locomotives in that Ajmer workshop is higher than in other metre gauge repair shops in India, and the real question is whether they apportion their labour charges correctly between repairs in locomotive construction. It is easy to show a very good result in the manufacture of locomotives by the way in which you divide your labour charges between repairs and locomotives. Certainly at present I am not satisfied that the real cost of manufacturing locomotives in Ajmer is not considerably higher than the cost at which we could import them.

K-1348. Are the engines and rolling stock made at Ajmer better than those received from Europe ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I am not prepared to say that.

K-1349. Are they not more powerful than any you have had before ?—The ones which are being built at Ajmer now are to a new standard and that new standard may be more powerful than that of engines previously imported ; but it is not because they are built at Ajmer that they are more powerful.

K-1350. Will the Railway Board adopt the Burma and Assam-Bengal Railways rule about disciplinary measures, recorded in their memorandum, for all other railways in India ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : That system has been brought to the notice of all other Agents of railway administrations.

K-1351. Will the Railway Board extend to all other railways the system of the labour bureaux at Moghulpura ?—We are watching the working of the labour bureaux very carefully, and we will extend them to our State-worked railways if we find that they provide the best means of dealing with the question.

K-1352. Will the Railway Board be pleased to make enquiries from the Indian railways as to the method and present practice of eye-testing ?—I understand that our Railway Medical Officers advised the Railway Board to examine the systems prevailing not only in England but in other countries also—Germany, Belgium and France, and that our system is based on the system adopted by European countries.

K-1353. Will the Railway Board advise the railway administrations to accept certificates of licenciate doctors, *hakims* and *vaids* ?—No.

K-1354. Is the statement contained in the Railway Board memorandum, that Indian mechanical students are rather of poor quality, not refuted by the results of examinations which show that 80 per cent. of such men pass ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : These remarks apply only to recruitment in Burma. There has, I think, been some misunderstanding on the part of some gentlemen, who have taken these remarks to apply to the whole of India.

K-1355. *Colonel Gidney* : Do you provide lady doctors at any of your big stations like Ajmer, etc., for the wives and children of your employees ? —(*Mr. Parsons*) : No, and I do not think we should be able to agree to such a proposal. Our duty is towards our employees and not necessarily towards their families. No Department of the Government of India provides women doctors to attend their officers' wives or children.

K-1356. Is it a fact that officers of non-Asiatic domicile receive specialist treatment and accessories outside the railway hospitals, *e.g.*, free nurses, free medicines, and free operations by specialists if necessary ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : They get certain special treatment free of cost. It is a greater privilege than that given to the officer of Asiatic domicile, but nothing on the lines which you suggest.

K-1357. *The Chairman* : It is a Government order following from the Lee Commission's Report ?—That is so.

K-1358. *Colonel Gidney* : Will the Railway Board consider the advisability of extending the same privilege to officers of Asiatic domicile, and all subordinates, when specialist treatment is required, and for which they now have to pay themselves ?—Our present view is that we do all that is necessary for the classes of employees to which you refer.

K-1359. That does not answer my question. Are you prepared to consider the application of similar privileges to those classes of servants which I have just mentioned ?—We are not prepared to give a definite promise.

K-1360. Will you consider it ?—We are not prepared to definitely promise that we will even consider it.

K-1361. Why ? Is this just ? We have heard a lot about racial distinctions and discrimination. Is it a fact that communities employed on the railways are placed in two distinct categories, namely, Europeans and Statutory Indians, and that in the latter term are included alike Hindus, Muslims, Anglo-Indians and other classes ?—Yes.

K-1362. You admitted at your last examination that Anglo-Indians for employment on the railways were included as natives of India. If that is so, can you tell the Commission in what way racial discrimination can exist between Anglo-Indians and Indians, as has so often been asked here ?—We deny that racial discrimination does exist.

K-1363. You have admitted that Anglo-Indians and domiciled Europeans have special aptitude for railway work ; and make better Drivers and Guards than Indians. Will you admit that their selection to these posts for many years has been, and is, based on merit, and not on any racial discrimination ?—It is now on merit, but there was, in the past, to a certain extent, racial discrimination on certain railways.

K-1364. To-day it is done on merit only ?—Yes.

K-1364a. Will you be prepared to admit that, both being natives of India, this is really one of merit and not of racial distinction ?—I would rather answer that question five or six years hence when the new rules have been in force for some time.

K-1365. But your principle for promotion to-day is one based on merit ?—Absolutely.

K-1366. Therefore the distinction that exists to-day between Anglo-Indians and Indians is based on merit and not on race ?—With regard to promotion, we can go a long way back and say that our principle of promoting people has always been with reference to their ability and good conduct.

K-1367. When was railway finance separated from the Government of India ?—In 1924.

K-1368. Will you agree with me when I say that the total money which has been placed to the credit of the railway Reserve Fund is 20 crores ?—Yes.

K-1369. Is it a fact that the railway administration has had to reduce its staff this year, both officers and particularly subordinates in the Engineering Branch, and that this has been the result of lack of finance ?—(Mr. Parsons) : I am not sure about the reduction this year. There was, and will be, a reduction as our programme of work is reduced.

K-1370. Has the Railway Reserve Fund been merged in the general balances of the Government of India ?—(Mr. Parsons) : Yes. I answered that on the previous day.

K-1371. Had not the Railway Reserve Fund been merged in the general finances and been used by the Finance Department for other purposes ? Had this fund been placed in securities, these securities could have been realised and utilized to-day by the Railway Board for new railway projects which have been stopped for the present for want of finance and which would in turn have prevented the retrenchment of so many officials and the unemployment of many officials, menials, and subordinates, and also been the means by which subordinates' wages could have been increased or kept as they are to-day and not reduced as appears to be the policy of the Railway Board.

*The Chairman* : That sounds like a proclamation.

*Colonel Gidney* : I know Sir ! but I want a simple answer : yes or no.

*The witness (Mr. Parsons)* : I can say this : it is a proclamation to which I myself should not subscribe my name.

K-1372. *Colonel Gidney* : I do not want your name. I want your opinion.—(Mr. Parsons) : My opinion is that I do not subscribe to it.

K-1373. Do you think that an Anglo-Indian or a European can live on the minimum wage which has now been prescribed on the East Indian and the North-Western Railways, of Rs. 18 for a Fireman, and Rs. 33 for a Ticket Collector, especially after compulsory deductions have been made from this pittance ?—(Mr. Hayman) : I should like to speak on the point of the Ticket Collector, because you have given some figures in your memorandum and I have worked out certain calculations from these figures. Speaking from memory I remember you have stated that a Ticket Collector starts on Rs. 33 and goes up to Rs. 190. You apparently think that it is a very low wage, especially the commencing wage. In the first place I wish to say that most Anglo-Indian Ticket Collectors come in when they are very young, and are mostly engaged at stations where they live with their parents. Speaking after a full consideration of the question I do not think that a wage of Rs. 33 is very low for that young man having regard to his educational qualifications. I come to the next point in which you have tried to make out a case that the rise to Rs. 190 at the end of 33 years—that is the average—is an inadequate one.

*Colonel Gidney* : I did not make that out at all. I was only referring to the initial wage.

*The witness (Mr. Hayman)* . Then I shall not speak on that.

K-1374. But does the railway engage a man for his parents to maintain him, or for the railway to maintain him ?—Our general policy is that the man should maintain himself. But in certain classes we do get people below the minimum age of recruitment and we fix our wages a little lower.

K-1375. *Mr. Sastri* : We heard in Lahore that even the wife's earnings and the earnings of children should be taken into account ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : But that is against our policy. We wish to make that clear.

*Colonel Gidney* : Let me put myself in the position of an Anglo-Indian Ticket Collector without parents. I am given a monthly pay of Rs. 33 and I am compulsorily deducted Rs. 12 which leaves me a balance of Rs. 21. I want to know how I can live on Rs. 21 and clothe myself respectably on such a pittance ?

*The Chairman* : May I know at what age ?

*Colonel Gidney* : Generally at 18 or 19.

*The witness (Mr. Hayman)* : The ticket collector enters service at 17 or 18.

K-1376. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : What are their educational qualifications ?—There are different rules on different railways. For instance, it is the 6th standard on the North-Western Railway.

K-1377. *Colonel Gidney* : Is it not a fact that a house sweeper gets more than this Rs. 21 ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : No, not in Delhi at any rate.

K-1378. There is a suggestion made in my memorandum with regard to the difference in the standard of living of an Indian and that of an Anglo-Indian. Do you accept that there is a difference in the standard of living of these two people and would you accept that as a basis on which you might fix the minimum wage of an employee ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We have not examined that and we are not prepared to express an opinion. (*Mr. Russell*) : I do not think we can accept that.

K-1379. Would you object to each railway having a grievances committee ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : What do you mean by grievances committee ?

K-1380. A separate department of the railway called the grievances department.

*The Chairman* : Surely the labour bureau is an endeavour to meet that point.

*Colonel Gidney* : Labour bureaux are objected to by employees on account of the official touch they possess.

*The Chairman* : What is your suggestion ?

*Colonel Gidney* : My suggestion is that a grievances committee has been repeatedly asked for in the Legislative Assembly and has been denied. This is what I want established on every railway.

*Mr. Sastri* : Why not form trade unions ?

—*Colonel Gidney* : I want a real grievances committee in which all the grievances of employees will be considered.—(*Mr. Hayman*) : By whom ?

K-1381. By officials and representatives of employees, almost on the Whitley system.—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We would like to see the concrete and detailed proposals.

K-1381a. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Mr. Hayman, have you not had that suggestion personally from me.—Have I not given you personally an answer ?

K-1382. *Colonel Gidney* : Mr. Russell, do you object to that ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : The N. W. Railway, the B., B. and C. I. Railway and the G. I. P. Railway have staff committees before which grievances can be put.

K-1383. What I want is a distinct grievance committee instead of burdening the Labour Member of the Railway Board with all this work ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : He is not burdened.

*The Chairman* : Colonel Gidney, I hope you will not attach my name to anything which in any way carries the name of grievance committee.

*Colonel Gidney* : Your committee, Sir, was a settlement committee.

K-1384. If you do not approve of that, would you accept the staff committees that exist on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway to-day ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I do not know what staff committee that is.

K-1385. That is a committee which examines the grievances of employees and then presents them to the railway administration. They have district and central staff committees.—They have that on more than one railway. The North Western Railway, the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway all have these committees.

K-1386. Would you approve an extension of that on all Railways ?—The administration started it themselves.

K-1387. What is the difference between that and a grievance committee ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : That is what we ourselves have some difficulty in discovering.

K-1388. Regarding confidential reports, there was a recent circular from the Railway Board instructing Heads of Departments not to make unfavourable confidential reports about officers under them, before giving them frequent warnings and advice. The circular also said that if a confidential report was adverse it should be shown to the officer concerned. Will the Railway Board consider the advisability of extending this principle to the subordinates also ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : As a matter of fact, the investigation of this matter so far as the subordinates were concerned came earlier than this circular with regard to officers which Colonel Gidney has mentioned. On all the railways in India it is the practice to inform the subordinate concerned before anything unfavourable to him is recorded in his service sheet.

K-1389. That statement is in distinct disagreement to my information. That may be true as far as the Railway Board's knowledge of such matters is concerned. At any rate my knowledge and experience are at variance with yours ?—The Railway Board's knowledge is based on reports from the Agents of the various railway administrations.

K-1390. Will the Railway Board put an end to the system of officials writing demi-official letters to each other for instance in cases like this : a man is transferred from one station to another because he has not pleased an official. Along with his transfer goes a demi-official letter from the official in the station in which he last served to the official under whom he is going to serve, which bars his future prospects. This practice exists freely on the railways.—(*Mr. Russell*) : I have never seen it myself. I have had several persons sent to me from one district or another saying that the man had not given satisfaction but recommending that he might be given another chance. He was sent to me to give him another chance, but I do not think I have ever had a demi-official letter about it.

K-1391. That is an exception. Will the Railway Board send instructions to the Agents that if such a practice exists, it should be discontinued ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We believe that it does not exist. If Colonel Gidney would give one instance, we would deal with it.

K-1392. It is obviously a very difficult thing to produce a confidential letter ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : How then did you get evidence about it ?

K-1393. As an antidote to indebtedness would the Railway Board allow railway employees to insure their lives and allow the premiums to be deducted from their accumulated provident fund ? I understand that that is allowed in other Government services.—(*Mr. Parsons*) : Certainly we are prepared to consider that, but I am not very sure about it.

K-1394. The Railway Board being such a large employer of labour should it not establish its own insurance company ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : No. certainly not.

K-1395. Regarding superannuation, while gazetted and non-gazetted ministerial officers are permitted to continue in service up to 60 years, the locomotive staff is superannuated at 55 years. Are you prepared to extend the same privilege to the locomotive running staff also provided they are pronounced medically fit, or to cancel the privilege given to the ministerial branch of the service and make it all alike by removing this invidious distinction ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : As far as I know this privilege is not given to the traffic running staff.

K-1396. The personal assistant to the Agent and Officers of that nature can be employed up to 60 years of age, whereas those in the locomotive running staff cannot ?—How does it help one class of staff if you decrease the privileges enjoyed by another class ?

K-1397. Can you tell me the number of covenanted Foremen and Assistant Foremen in the workshops and Signal Inspectors in the signal department on all State Railways ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I could give you the figures if you wish.

K-1398. I ask for this information because although the railways have been running for seventy years ; the practice of bringing Foremen and Assistant Foremen and Signal Inspectors from England still continues. And so the men in India who are trained in our railway workshops are not given a chance except in a few rare cases. I have already brought this point out in Lahore.—We could give you the figures.

*The Chairman* : It would be more useful to get the proportion instead of the totals.

K-1399. *Col. Gidney* : Do you object to the application of the Fundamental Rules to the railway servants ?—Yes, we do.



K-1400. Under the Government Servants' Conduct Rule, though an employee is allowed to vote for the election of a member to the Legislative Assembly, he is not permitted to represent his grievances to that member. Would you object to altering this rule so as to remove this restriction ?

*The Chairman* : That is surely a general civil service question.

K-1401. *Col. Gidney* : Mr. Russell, are you, as once the Agent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, aware that there is a Mutual Benefit Society officially administered by the railway ?—Yes.

K-1401a. Are you aware that there is a Union that has been trying to develop its own Mutual Benefit Society but is thwarted in its efforts in that the Great Indian Peninsula Railway makes it compulsory for its employees to subscribe to that society ?—They used to make it compulsory, but that has been altered now.

K-1402. Is not the development of Mutual Benefit Societies one of the chief attractions of railway unions ?—I could not say.

K-1403. *The Chairman* : Do I understand that the practice has been changed ?—The practice of making compulsory deductions has been changed. In the old days certain classes of the staff had to be members of the Society for their own protection. Now it is purely voluntary.

K-1404. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : With regard to racial discrimination the memorandum of the North Western Railway union refers to certain graduates who were appointed in 1920 on Rs. 75 per mensem. " They are at present drawing Rs. 95 per mensem. They have earned an increment of Rs. 20 after 9 years service, average yearly increment being about Rs. 2. This is the state of affairs. Two Anglo-Indians were appointed about the same time on Rs. 75 per mensem ; one of them is now working as a Goods Supervisor on Rs. 350 per mensem at Amritsar and the other is working as a Superintendent on Rs. 400 per mensem." Does this happen in actual practice that rapid promotions are given to Anglo-Indians who are recruited on the same terms for the same jobs, but not so in the case of Indians ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : It is very difficult to reply with regard to individual cases, cases we know nothing about.

K-1405. I would like you to look into cases of this nature. There is another case mentioned in the memorandum of the same union :

" Recently one Anglo-Indian Guard drawing Rs. 75 per mensem was appointed as Superintendent in preference to many suitable Indian candidates of long service and good qualifications, one of the candidates being an M.A., LL.B., with 12 years' service. These selections were supposed to be conducted on grounds of suitability. Then again one Anglo-Indian Ticket Collector drawing Rs. 33 per mensem was imported into the Chief Commercial Manager's Office on Rs. 160 per mensem in preference to a number of graduates and other senior men who were eagerly waiting for their due promotions."

The point I am driving at is that although racial discrimination has been abolished in theory, in actual practice we do find cases arising in which there is some vestige of racial discrimination.—(*Mr. Russell*) : You must admit that all we can do is to start every body on the same pay in the

first instance, later on with regard to selection posts we must take the best men.

K-1406. But why not the Indian ?—Surely you do not mean to imply that every Indian is the best man. You have quoted cases on one side. From my own personal experience I could quote hundreds of cases on the other side.

K-1407. But here is a class of graduates, competent men who have been selected on account of the pressure put by the Legislative Assembly ?—I do not think you would suggest that, because a man is an LL.B. he would make a particularly efficient Guard.

K-1408. It was not the case of a Guard I gave you ; it was the case of a man, an M.A., LL.B., of 12 years' service having been superseded by a Guard as a Superintendent. The Anglo-Indian Guard had been recruited on Rs. 75 a month.—(*Mr. Parsons*) : At any rate the Railway Board think that these posts should be filled purely by selection. You, Mr. Chaman Lall would hear of cases in which selection has been made of an Anglo-Indian or a European over the heads of Indians who are of the same service or even longer service ; but I feel very doubtful whether you would hear from your correspondents of the cases the other way about.

K-1409. But if you really intend to carry out your policy of abolishing racial discrimination will you give definite instructions to the Agents telling them that the policy is not meant to be carried out on paper, but meant to be carried out in actual practice ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I do not think you want us to go back to the system of seniority pure and simple.

K-1410. I do not want to go back to the system of seniority pure and simple, but the question raised by Colonel Gidney is whether it is a pure question of merit.—We are trying to make it so.

K-1411. If in appointing Anglo-Indians the criterion is merit, would the Railway Board be prepared to set up Public Service Commission on the basis of the existing Public Service Commission, and leave it to them to fill up all these posts ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : The existing Public Service Commission has nothing whatever to do with the promotion of employees already in service.

K-1412. I am not talking of promotion, but of recruitment. Are you prepared to set up a similar body for the railways for the purpose of recruitment ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : The Public Service Commission already carries out recruitment for us in all cases in which it does so for other Departments of the Government of India. The Commission itself does not deal with subordinate ranks.

K-1413. I am perfectly aware that the Public Service Commission is utilized by you for certain purposes. What about the subordinate ranks ? I am talking of recruitment to them ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I think, Mr. Chaman Lall, we should prefer to keep to our own methods. A Public Service Commission for officers is an entirely different thing from a Public Service Commission for subordinates. I do not think one Public Service Commission could do it.

K-1414. Could you have one for each railway system ?—They have got selection committees already.

K-1415. By whom are they manned ?—By officers of the railway, by men who know what is required.

K-1416. Is it not one of the criteria of the Public Service Commission that it should be manned by independent men, who have nothing to do with the particular interests for which people are recruited ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : If I might give my opinion, it would be almost impossible to run the railways as a commercial concern, if the men responsible for the running of the railways were not also left free to make the selection of the employees under them.

K-1417. Do you think that an officer of the railway is more qualified than a person in the position of a member of the Public Service Commission to find out whether a graduate who applies for a post is fit for it or not ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I do not like saying anything about the Public Service Commission ; but I think they themselves would admit that an officer of the railway is probably better qualified to select men to fill subordinate posts.

K-1418. If that is so, why is it that the Railway Board at present resort to the Public Service Commission for filling up certain posts ?—Because that is the policy of the Government of India.

K-1419. Therefore they are quite competent ?—You must not expect me to express an opinion on the policy of the Government of India.

K-1420. In the memorandum submitted to us by the North Western Railway Union there were mentioned very serious cases of arbitrary discharges. Is the Railway Board thinking of changing this policy in regard to discharges ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I have already stated that we have issued orders instructing the State railways regarding discharges and dismissals of their employees.

K-1421. What are they ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Orders have not actually issued. We hope to issue them in the course of a fortnight or so. These orders particularly relate to the question of discharge or dismissal and also the question of dealing with appeals against discharges and dismissals.

K-1422. Is there any provision in these orders to the effect that the evidence available against the person to be discharged, should be shown to him so that he might examine the evidence on which he was going to be discharged ?—The man will be given a charge sheet giving the facts on which the charge is made.

K-1423. Not as they are at the present moment ?—I cannot say what they are at the present moment.

K-1424. The point is ; when you make a charge sheet and ask the man to explain, the evidence on which the charges were prepared must be shown to him. Will you in your new orders make the evidence available to him ? I shall give you one instance :

“ Mr. Saleh Muhammad, Assistant Station Master, Padidan, service about 25 years, discharged under terms of agreement. He was debited Rs. 2,000 towards the cost of a cash bag stolen from the station safe. The police did not hold Mr. Saleh Muhammad to blame. The debit was not cancelled though he appealed several times. Eventually, on the advice of his pleaders he filed a civil

suit against the Administration for the illegal debit. He was called by the Divisional Superintendent and all the expenses and the amount of debit were paid to him and a compromise effected. On the third day of this event when the Divisional Superintendent came to know that the case had been withdrawn Mr. Saleh Muhammad was discharged telegraphically under terms of agreement."

(*Mr. Hayman*). : I thought you were going to quote this case. My answer to that would be that in the long history of the North Western Railway, I do not think more than one or two cases of that nature could be quoted against that administration.

K-1425. I have got ten cases here. If you care I shall give hundreds of cases.—Of that nature ?

K-1426. Yes, of that nature. Therefore it is that I ask whether in the instructions that you are going to issue, you will make it perfectly plain and obvious that the evidence on which you intend to take action against a man is made available to him. It is the just and proper course to adopt if you are going to take away a man's job.—May I give a practical answer to that question ? If we charge a man with an offence we will tell him how we came to charge him with that offence. Supposing it is a charge of disobedience of the orders of immediate superior, you will say : " you are charged with the disobedience of such and such order on the report of so and so ". That is the evidence on which the charge is based.

K-1427. You know Mr. Hayman, that is exactly the difficulty at the present moment. What happens is this : the man is given a charge sheet and from that charge sheet he has to find out on his own responsibility what the evidence against him is. Under the Fundamental Rules applicable to Government servants, an enquiry is instituted and the evidence against the person concerned is made available to him, not only in the preliminary enquiry, but also in the final enquiry. Why should the same system be not adopted on the railways also ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I shall have to consider that.

K-1428. Is it the policy of the Railway Board to give promotions due to men who are eligible for them ? Do they not import people from outside and thus block promotions ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : The policy of the Railway Board is to give the men the promotions due to them.

K-1429. Supposing I have put in ten years' satisfactory service and am at present officiating in a particular post, in matters relating to which I am an expert. Ordinarily is it the policy of the Railway Board to confirm me in my officiating post ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : If there is a vacancy and if the officiating incumbent is competent to hold that post permanently.

K-1430. About half an hour ago, a letter was handed over to me from Lahore. This is the case of a man named Slark and this is what he says :

" I wish to bring to your notice the following case, which has been dealt with, since the Labour Commission and you left Lahore. During the period of your visit here, my case as usual was placed ' under consideration ', very useful words for the North-Western Railway in times of necessity.

I am at present employed in the North-Western Railway Locomotive Works, Moghulpura, and have been in their service for the past

nine years. For the past year and five months I have been promoted to officiate as Chargeman.

During this period I have worked under several covenanted Foremen, who have all given me good recommendations regarding my abilities as a Chargeman. If a reference is needed, please ask the Agent of the said railway for my personal file.

On my asking for confirmation in the post, I am forwarded a letter, a true copy of which is herewith attached for your reference. From this it is obvious that the Foremen are of no use or out of date, otherwise 'Home unemployment' is first considered and then we of the country. In this manner, there is no scope for the ambitious men born in India."

The letter runs as follows :—

"Please inform Mr. A. W. Slark, Officiating Senior Chargeman, Tools, that there is no permanent vacancy for a senior chargeman tool maker against which he can be promoted.

The post against which he is officiating is reserved for a chargeman, tools, who is coming from Home."

—(*Mr. Hayman*) : An indent has been sent home for a man with special qualifications and training on considerations which the railway administration are convinced are good considerations. In the case they located an expert tool maker from England. When that person is on his way from England to fill his post, nobody else can be appointed permanently to the post. That is intended to be filled by the permanent incumbent of the post. That is what the letter implies.

K-1431. This man is an Anglo-Indian.—I do not care whether he is an Indian or an Anglo-Indian or any other community.

K-1432. Is it your policy to give preference to your own men who have worked for you for years and have given you good service, or is it your policy to leave them on one side and import for these jobs ?—I think we have made it clear that it is unhesitatingly our policy to recruit for our subordinate grades entirely from India. But we have to recruit a few experts in locomotive practice for workshops. The administration in this case must have been convinced that they wanted an expert man with up-to-date methods of tool making to fill that post.

K-1433. Could the administration not have sent this very man to England to be trained ?—We must assume that they were convinced that this man would not fully fill the bill.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : Is not a tool maker a very high expert ? The really good ones are paid enormous salaries even at home. Even at Home a first class tool maker is very difficult to find ; it is a very specialized job.

K-1434. If it is a specialized job, this man has given satisfaction, why was he not sent for training to England ? I ask, why is preference not given to your own employees ; why are they not given the opportunities of making themselves fit for these jobs ?—I think the figures which we are going to supply you at the request of Colonel Gidney will prove that we do move in the direction I have explained.

K-1435. Will you agree with me, Mr. Russell, that from 1919 onwards the workers on your railways have been more or less constantly demanding more pay and better conditions and have been making representations in that behalf ?—I do not think I can admit that they have been doing it constantly. In 1919-20 they actually got an increase in their pay, I think.

K-1436. Since 1919 on numerous occasions they have been making representations ?—Certain classes of men have made representations.

K-1437. You say that there is a great deal of indebtedness amongst them ?—There is no doubt about that.

K-1438. Has that got something to do with their demands that they have been putting forward for better conditions of pay and prospects ?—I am afraid I cannot say that.

K-1439. In the memorandum of the North Western Railway, it is stated that the workers on their system are more efficient now than they were. Have you had the same experience ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : If you want my personal opinion the efficiency of the railways has increased enormously during the last ten years, but I think the major portion of that efficiency has been due to machinery.

K-1440. That is to say the workers have had opportunities of training themselves in new methods ?—No ; it is new machinery.

K-1441. They have adapted themselves to new methods ?—Yes, to the use of new machines.

K-1442. Would you agree with me that the average worker that you have on your system, since he is quite capable of adapting himself to new methods, is an efficient worker and an intelligent worker ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I am afraid on the average it depends on what standard you take. Are you comparing it with the English or American standard ?

K-1443. I am not comparing it with those countries because I am not comparing the wages which are paid. I am asking this : as the directors of the railway system of India, do you think the average worker on your system is an intelligent worker. You have admitted that he is an efficient worker ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I do not think we admitted that he was an efficient worker. We stated that the efficiency of the Indian railways has increased enormously during the last ten years.

K-1444. Then I ask you, do you consider him to be intelligent ?—I am afraid I cannot answer that question.

K-1445. Has he availed himself of the educational facilities that you have provided for him, and has he been too quick himself to avail himself of them both as regards education and training. Whatever exiguous opportunities you have given him has he availed himself of them ?—I am afraid I do not quite follow.

K-1446. You have made a very serious statement in your memorandum and I want to draw your attention to it. This is how an average worker is described : “ Rich in emotion but deficient in the virility of thought and reason, he is apt to be easily carried off his feet by extraneous influences. Welfare work, including education and sports which the Railway Board have consistently with their other obligations, made every effort to promote, has barely touched the fringe of the labour force which is conservative by nature and slow to adapt a change however beneficial. The spread of education, it seems to the Railway Board, is the chief means which can dis-

sipate the mist of ignorance and apathy, and it will also rouse the worker to a higher ambition and a proper appreciation of an improved standard of living." My point is that time and again the workers on your system have demanded improved conditions and an improved standard of living and it is not for you to charge them with lack of ambition in that respect ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I think what you want is to ask whether we adhere to this statement or not ? We do ; this was made after very careful consideration.

K-1447. You still adhere to this, that he has become more efficient and opportunities have been given to him ?—I think I said the major portion of the efficiency was due to new machines.

K-1448. I will not wrangle about that. Since you base all those charges against your workers on the ground of their illiteracy and ignorance, will you tell me what attempts you have made to provide educational facilities and facilities for training your workers ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : The facilities for training are described in our memorandum.

K-1449. Is that all ?—I made it very clear that we were in some respects at the beginning of things and it was our intention to provide more and more schools where we considered them to be necessary.

K-1450. I take it that all the facilities you have provided for your 8,00,000 workers is to give a total grant which comes to little over a lakh of rupees ?—When you talk of a total grant are you speaking of the children of employees ; or are you also speaking of workers in the service ?

K-1451. They are the children who will seek employment in your workshops ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Mr. Parsons has explained the policy very fully.

K-1452. *Mr. Cliff* : In giving certain figures you have used the expression " working expenses ". Are the expressions " working expenses " and " operating expenses " interchangeable. In your supplementary memorandum you speak of " operating expenses " ?—Yes, in my figures in order to calculate the operating expenses, as explained to Sir Alexander Murray, I have taken all working expenses.

K-1453. And all working expenses in this document are included under operating expenses ?—Yes.

K-1454. Can you give us a relevant comparative figure for this just in the same way as you have given us for passengers and ton miles for 1913-14 ?—I think I can, and I will make an investigation.

K-1454a. In Chapter IV of your memorandum you have given for certain classes the percentage of sick leave. Could you give the cost of the payments made for sickness during the last three years ?—What exactly do you mean by payment made for sickness ?

K-1455. I want to follow the three columns in the statement contained in Chapter IV of your memorandum under " the average percentage of sick leave granted ". Can you give us a statement showing the cost of whatever you paid to people on sick leave for each of these three grades for three years ?—It would be very difficult to give you this, because when a man sends in a medical certificate he sometimes gets what we call privilege leave even though he has sent in a sickness certificate. We do not book separately in our accounts the payments for each class of leave

that we give ; so that the investigation would be a very tedious one for the railway administration. If you would be satisfied with figures relating to a short recent period I think the Chief Commissioner would undertake to make an investigation.

K-1456. When we looked at the wages book of the North Western Railway we saw that they were marked there as sick or otherwise ; the letter " S " was put in the column ?—Yes.

K-1457. Are not these extracted ?—They are not extracted ; therefore we would have to go into all these details in order to get you the information.

K-1458. Supposing you took a short period, would that be subject to the criticism that it is not a fair test of what the sickness cost you ?—It would, because there are certain periods in the year when a large number get ill from certain diseases.

K-1459. Would it be possible to take the same figure as you have taken for cost of living for three years and let the Commission have an indication of what sickness pay costs you ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I very much doubt whether we could collect the figures.

K-1460. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : If you took the figures entirely for sickness absence and assumed that they were all on full sick pay, would not that give us the figure ?—I should have to assume an average pay for all individuals, because this covers all these individuals. If you take staff drawing over Rs. 250, if I take it as an average of 125, I could multiply it and give you the figure. In my opinion it would not be worth the paper it was written on.

K-1461. *Mr. Clifff* : In my view it is important that we should get an index of sickness and the cost of sickness in a large undertaking such as yours. I should be content to-day if you will look at the question and tell us what you think you can do to help us along those lines ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I can readily say we will do that.

K-1462. You have answered a large number of questions and said that a number of matters are under consideration ; would it be possible at a later date to tell us what you have done in respect of these matters ?—We can undertake to do that.

K-1463. Is it possible to indicate to this Commission the opinion of the Board as to ways and means that can be adopted both by the Board and by the Agents in dealing with the railway union federation and the railway unions in respect of the matters arising out of their employment ?—(*Mr. Russell*) : I think that you and various other members of the Commission feel is that we should show sympathy towards railway unions, and that we do not show that sympathy in a practical way ; that Unions feel that because of that they are not getting full credit for what they are doing ; that unless they get full credit for what they are doing they will not increase in numbers and strength. You would like us to tell you how we propose to help the unions to strengthen themselves. Is that what you mean ?

K-1464. I will take that for a moment, and see if you can tell me what you can do in respect of that ?—What I think we can do is that we will tell the Agents that when they get a definite representation from a union they should take steps to advise the union of what action has



been taken. They should also advise the staff of what action has been taken and show that they do pay attention to what the union is doing. Of course I refer to recognized unions and only to subjects which we allow unions to represent to the administration.

K-1465. Does that mean that on matters which are not capable of being represented to a particular Agent and which must be represented to the Railway Board, the same policy will be adopted?—I think every subject that refers to a particular administration can be represented to the Agent.

K-1466. But on the other hand you have found it necessary I think as the result of practical experience to say that the Railway Board must address itself to labour matters and the Railway Board has to take decisions I think that are common decisions on many subjects. Do you say the same in respect of those matters?—That means in dealing with the federation of railway unions? We have not yet considered the question of dealing directly as I have already said.

K-1467. The railway union represented the matter to me in this way : it is not altogether a question of strengthening their organization, but they feel that the door of the consultation room is constantly barred. Then the Members say to the trade union officials : the only way to open that door is by a stoppage of the services?—(*Mr. Russell*) : As far as individual unions are concerned, I do not think the door is barred. I am speaking of unions which have been recognized by a particular railway. I think the Agent is normally always open to see them.

*Mr. Cliff* : I will not press you any further on the matter just now, but I would like the Board to address itself to the question of the ways and means that could be adopted to encourage regular negotiations and orderly progress. That is what I think the unions want ; they are asking for orderly progress and regular negotiation.

K-1468. *Mr. Ahmed* : Is it a fact that porters who are employed on the Railway stations to carry the luggage of passengers to and from the train have to pay a portion of their earnings to the licensed contractors?—(*Mr. Hayman*), I think *Mr. Ahmed* gave the answer to his question earlier to-day when he said a contractor would not work unless he made some profit

K-1469. I understand you to admit that what I say is true. Do you appreciate that the building contractors of the Railway companies make a profit of 20 per cent?—(*Mr. Russell*) : Most of them complain that they make no profits at all.

K-1470. And yet you recognize the system of accepting tenders from contractors for the construction of railway buildings. These are facts ; I will not put any questions which are not based on facts. I suppose you know that many railway officers have been charged with criminal offences. When you appoint lower grade officers, clerks and servants on the railways, do you advertise?—(*Mr. Hannay*) : For the lower grade appointments, no.

K-1471. You do not advertise, and I take it that the head clerk in the appointments department, the *Chhota Sahib* and the *Barra Sahib* have full discretion in the matter of appointments?—That is so.

K-1472. They have a free hand ?—Not necessarily so ; the system of appointment varies. You have heard that there are selection boards in a number of places.

K-1473. I am dealing with the lower grade staff receiving from Rs. 20 to Rs. 30 per month ; for instance goods clerks ?

*The Chairman* : What is the kind of appointment that you wish to recommend ?

*Mr. Ahmed* : We have suggested that already and instructions have been given. I am simply saying they are doing this and it is an abuse. I suppose you know that a number of officers are under trial and some of them have been sent to jail for taking bribes. Some of them are in the E. B. Railway at Sealdah under prosecution ?—I have not heard of that and I should not think so.

K-1474. If you do not advertise these vacancies how do you preserve the respective quota in respect of different classes of people in India as far as communal rights are concerned ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I would like to amplify in some respects Mr. Hannay's statement. I do not know whether Mr. Hannay intended to say there was absolutely no advertisement. (*Mr. Hannay*) : I said that we did not advertise the lower grades.

K-1475. I am speaking of the poor people earning Rs. 20 or Rs. 30 a month—You mean the men engaged on the lowest grade ?

K-1476. Yes ?—We do not advertise for these.

K-1477. I have been given to understand that those posts are filled at the discretion of the *Chhota Sahib* and the *Barra Sahib* and the head clerk. Now I am asking how you appoint the fixed number of men of different communities in accordance with the circular which was sent out, probably by Mr. Parsons' office, in the Railway Board ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : I disclaim any responsibility for the issue of any circular of that description from my own particular portion of the Railway Board.

K-1478. How do you do it ?—I understand you are referring to the lowest paid classes. You ask how we propose to get representation of minority communities among, say, gang men. I do not think there are any methods of doing so.

K-1479. I did not ask about gang men ?—I am taking gang men as an example ; they are some of the lowest paid people to whom you were referring.

K-1480. I am asking about the lower paid employees receiving Rs. 20 or Rs. 30 a month ?—Do you mean the people in the workshops ?

K-1481. No, clerks, as for instance a tally clerk ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : The rule as laid down by the Government of India is that a certain proportion of vacancies in superior posts and also a considerable extent I think in the clerical staff are reserved, to remove communal equalities. That does not, of course, apply to the great body of our labour, the workshop hands, gang men and so on.

*The Chairman* : That disposes of that question.

K-1482. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Mr. Russell, may I refer you to your memorandum, with regard to education ? You sum up the position by referring to the prevailing illiteracy, inefficiency, low wages and poor standard of living of the workers. I appreciate how you can deal with inefficiency, because according to what the G. I. P. Railway's report tells

us there have been improvements in that direction. You can also deal with the question of low wages because you have special men on duty to see about that. You can also deal with poor standard of living because that is in your hands. But I should like to refer for a moment to this question of illiteracy. A great deal of information is given on that subject in your memorandum. You very truly say that the labourer employed is quick to avail himself of such facilities. Your memorandum deals with promotion and the difference between training and promoting an illiterate worker as compared with a literate worker, and also with the facilities for educating the illiterate staff and their children ; that is ordinary elementary education. You lay it down there that the general policy of the Board is going to be, as I see it, to divest itself of all responsibility, except in special cases, and to look to local authorities and local Governments for what you call ordinary primary education. You very aptly bring out the point that the spread of education is the chief means by which you can dissipate the mist of ignorance and apathy and you emphasize also the fact that at the root of the whole evil lies the ignorance of the worker. As I read it, you have been doing certain things with regard to primary education, but you are now divesting yourself of that responsibility and transferring it to the local authorities and local boards ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : That is correct ; that is the policy that we wish to adopt.

K-1483. In your opinion who is responsible for primary education in this country ; is it the Government of India or is it the local Governments ?—It is the Provincial Governments in their transferred departments ; that is, with regard to Indian primary education.

K-1484. As the largest employers of labour in India, the Railway Board I think have a special duty imposed upon them with regard to the education and the ignorance of the worker. As the largest employer of labour in India and also as a Department of the Government of India what have you actually done to educate public opinion in India and the local authorities as to the absolute necessity of this education about which you tell us so much in your memorandum ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : The education of Provincial Governments does not fall within the sphere of our activities

K-1485. I am putting it to you as the largest employer of labour in India and as a Government Department, possessing greater influence than any private individual, such as Sir Victor Sassoon, what have you done to bring home to the Government of India and the local Governments the necessity for doing something to build up a real live movement for providing elementary education, so that your workers can be properly educated ?—If I understand you, are asking : have we started a campaign to get these various authorities to realise their responsibility ?

K-1486. Yes ?—My answer is : we have certainly done nothing of the sort, nor in our position as a Department of the Government of India would it, I think, be feasible for us to do so.

K-1487. You have made no representations, for instance, to the Simon Commission, the Hartog Committee, or to any other public body as to the necessity of improving the education of the workers ?—I think I am right in saying that neither the Simon Commission nor the Hartog Committee desired to take evidence from us.

K-1488. They did not take up the question of primary education ?—They did not ask to see any representative from the Railway Department.

K-1489. They did not realise that you were the largest employer in India and a very important Department in giving the lead to other employers in India. I take it then that neither as employers nor as a Department of the Government of India have you ever made any attempt to influence directly or indirectly the Government of India or the local Governments to do more in the way of elementary education ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I cannot remember anything of that sort, but I would like to say that this policy has only very recently been declared. Previous to that the railway administrations provided schools at their own cost.

K-1490. So have private employers, but it is rather like dropping a pin into the sea, as far as its effect is concerned ?—I agree.

K-1491. Now that you have put plainly before yourself as well as others the difference which is pointed out in your memorandum between training for promotion and the necessity for elementary education, I am wondering whether you propose doing anything further. You are transferring your responsibility to the local Governments and local authorities, that is to say, in order to divest yourself of responsibility ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : You will realise that there are very considerable constitutional difficulties in the way of a Department of the Government of India representing matters of this kind either to Provincial Governments or local bodies.

K-1492. They do not hesitate to say that they want more Factory Inspectors or anything of that description ?—I think it would be extremely difficult for us to represent to a particular Provincial Government that we want more schools in their area without laying ourselves open to a reply from the Minister of that transferred department that we were interfering in a matter which is his concern.

K-1493. That is a particular case ?—I am taking a particular case because it is symptomatic of the cases which would always arise.

K-1494. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Would it be proper for the Agent and not the Railway Board to do that ?—If we could not do it, I do not see how an Agent could do it.

K-1495. *The Chairman* : May I take it in this way : you do not regard the Railway Board as an education authority ?—We do not.

K-1496. You have hitherto provided certain schools for the children of your workers, but you consider that the general supervision of primary education should be the responsibility of the local Governments ?—At any rate it is so now.

K-1497. But that does not mean that you are proposing to extend schools which you have already established ?—No, our desire is, if possible, to transfer them on terms to the Provincial Governments.

K-1498. You desire to transfer them if possible to local Governments rather in the same way as was done with regard to what are called non-private schools in England ?—I think that is so ; it is very much the same.

K-1499. *Mr. Cliff* : You do not now take new children into the schools, do you ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : We certainly do.

K-1500. *The Chairman* : Until you come to terms with the education authorities, your schools will continue ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : Certainly.

K-1501. Then separating primary education from vocational training, you regard it as being within your responsibility to provide training for your own workers to render them capable of promotion within your service ?—Yes. That is a very fair statement of our position, if I may say so.

K-1502. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You have already said to us that your policy now is to divest yourself of responsibility for primary education. I referred to this when we last had the pleasure of seeing you. You said you engaged the great bulk of your workers on the basis of physical capacity and not intelligence ?—(*Mr. Hannay*) : The lowest grades.

K-1503. What percentage of your workers would you say are chosen on that basis ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : I could not tell you off-hand.

K-1504. Could you tell us off-hand what is the proportion of illiteracy among your 8,00,000 employees. The all-India figure for illiteracy is something about 95 per cent. What do you think your figure would be ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : It is impossible for us to give a figure.

K-1505. *The Chairman* : It would be much less than the national figure ?—(*Mr. Hayman*) : Certainly, but we should not like to commit ourselves to giving any exact figure.

K-1506. *Sir Alexander Murray* : But I am right in summing up your position in regard to this matter by saying that you consider that the lack of education is at the root of all the evils with which you have to contend. You say that the ignorance of the worker is at the root of the whole evil, and yet I understand that as large employers of labour and as an important Department of the Government of India you are not taking any particular steps to bringing home either to the Government of India or to Provincial Governments the necessity for giving you a better ground on which to work ?—(*Mr. Parsons*) : What we are trying to do could I think be described as putting our own house in order by making it possible for our employees to send their own children to schools.

K-1507. Provided there are schools ?—Our scheme includes grants to employees who may have to send their children to schools at a distance from their homes.

K-1508. Particular types of employees ?—No.

K-1508a. That is how I read it ?—Will you give me the quotation. Are you referring to the statement in our memorandum : “ The assistance given by the Railway Board would be confined to employees who draw pay below a prescribed maximum ”.

K-1508b. That is the first thing. The second thing is : “ And if they are stationed in places where they cannot obtain education of the requisite standard ”. The third thing is : “ Are obliged to send them to boarding schools ”. But these are details, the point I am trying to make is that you in particular are not adopting any general policy to raise the standard of education among work-people generally in this country.

(The witnesses withdrew).

## (RAILWAYS)

## Fifteenth Meeting

AJMER

Monday, 11th November, 1929.

## PRESENT :

The Right Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY, (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, Kt.  
K.C.S.I., C.I.E.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt. C.B.E.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S., (*Medical Assessor*).Sir ERNEST JACKSON, Kt., C.I.E.,  
Agent. B. B. and C. I. Railway  
Company, Ltd.Lt.-Col. H. A. J. GIDNEY, M.L.A.  
Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E.  
Mr. GOVIND PRASAD.*Assistant Commissioners.*Mrs. TARA MARTIN, *Lady Assessor*.

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

} *Joint Secretaries.*

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

Mr. B. S. PATHIK, General Secretary, and Mr. H. L. SHARMA, representative of the B. B. and C. I. Railway Workers' Federation and Indian Apprentices' Association, Ajmer.

K-1509. *The Chairman* : Mr. Pathik, do you yourself work on the railway ?—Not now. I retired from the service about 13 years ago.

K-1510. When was your union formed ?—Seven months ago. I have been secretary for about a month.

K-1511. Is the previous secretary present to-day ?—No.

K-1512. What is the number of members in the union ?—About 3,500.

K-1513. Has the union been registered ?—Yes.

K-1514. There is no connection between your union and the existing unions in Bombay and Ahmedabad ?—No.

K-1515. With regard to the committee of management, how many of its members are men actually working on the railway or in the shops ?—(Mr. Sharma) : With the exception of the President, the General Secretary and myself as representative, all the members of the Executive Committee are railway employees.

K-1516. In what capacity do you serve the union ?—As representative only. I left the railway in 1921.

K-1517. Why was this union organized independently instead of as a branch of one of the existing unions on this railway ?—(Mr. Pathik) : Because we can approach the officials here on the spot very easily instead of having to write to Bombay and Ahmedabad.

K-1518. You felt that the other two unions were too far away, and you wished to have a union of the men here ?—Yes.

K-1519. Does the union confine itself to the men in the loco shop and carriage shop ?—(Mr. Sharma) : Yes.

K-1520. We have received from you two memoranda one of which I have just received ?—(Mr. Pathik) : The previous one is withdrawn.

K-1521. There has been no time to read the one just handed in, but I think I am right in saying that there are two main points in your submission to us : first, you complain that Indians do not have the same opportunities as Anglo-Indians and Europeans, and secondly you put forward a wish for considerably increased holidays and leave with full pay. At present you only have fifteen days leave in the year. You ask for that to be increased to 20, and in addition to that ten days casual leave, and then a number of holidays amounting to 25 days, making 55 days holiday in the year, plus 52 Sundays, or 107 days of leave in the year with pay. Then you say that a workman should work for 48 hours, but should be paid at the full rates for 60 hours ?—Yes.

K-1522. Have you yet approached the Railway Company as to recognizing your union ?—The former Secretary once wrote about it.

K-1523. What was the reply ?—The former Secretary had to go away, and he took away the important documents with him, but as far as we know no reply was received.

K-1524. Sir Victor Sassoon : What other unions are federated with you ?—(Mr. Sharma) : The Indian Apprentices' Association and the signalmen.

K-1525. You state that you consider that the prevailing wages are very low. Are they lower than the wages paid in other industries in or around Ajmer ? What is a coolie paid on your railway ?—He begins at 6 annas.

K-1526. What is he paid outside ?—He can earn from Re. 1 to Rs. 1-4-0 a day working with masons.

K-1527. A mason is a skilled tradesman. Do you say an ordinary unskilled coolie can get Rs. 1-4-0 a day in Ajmer ?—In agriculture he can earn Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 a month.

K-1528. What do the coolies in the mills get in Ajmer ?—(Mr. Pathik) : Our claim is not based on the wages paid in other industries. It is based on the fact that the present system is unsatisfactory.

K-1529. But we want to make a comparison, because, on the face of it, if a coolie can only get 6 annas on the railway and he can get Rs. 1-4-0 outside, he would go and take the Rs. 1-4-0. You ask that preference in recruiting should be given to the relations of workers. Do you ask that as a right?—(*Mr. Sharma*) : Preference should be given to them as a matter of right. If sons and relations of railway employees fall short by only a little of the qualifications held by outsiders, in that case preference should be given to them.

K-1530. In practice do the railways not give preference to the sons of employees?—Only in very few cases. Outsiders with very minimum qualifications have been taken in preference to the children of the employees.

K-1531. You say that medical help is free but otherwise costly. What do you mean?—If a man goes as an indoor patient it means a lot of expense. He has to pay for diet and other things.

K-1532. The expenses of being an indoor patient are costly?—Yes.

K-1533. How do men on the railway pay for their food? Do they pay for it monthly or by cash?—The majority buy their food supplies through the co-operative society, for which they pay monthly, but when they buy outside they pay cash.

K-1534. *Sir Alexander Murray* : All through your statement you are complaining about special treatment being given to Europeans and Anglo-Indians as compared with Indians. There are over 70,000 workers altogether on the B. B. and C. I. Railway, and there are only about 1,400 Europeans and Anglo-Indians altogether. If you take away all those 1,400, would the position of the remaining 70,000 Indians be improved?—We want equal treatment only. We claim that Indians should have the same privileges as Europeans and Anglo-Indians.

K-1535. You want the 70,000 to have the same privileges as the 1,400?—Those who deserve, not all.

*Mr. Cliff* : It seems to be a claim for equity for ability.

K-1536. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You state, "Generally the Indian employees are treated with contempt. They are considered only as beasts of burden". If they are only treated as beasts of burden, why are so many Indians wanting to get on the railway?—If a man is starving, and if he can get a mouthful of bread by coming to me, even though I treat him very harshly, he would not mind.

K-1538. I object to a statement like that appearing on the record. I have been through the workshops and I have seen no signs of Indians being treated either with contempt or as beasts of burden?—Their duty is not to carry anything on their shoulders, but they sometimes have to do so.

K-1539. You mean that there are one or two workers who have to carry things on their shoulders?—The coolies have to carry things on their



shoulders. It is not a fitter's job to have to carry things from one place to another.

K-1540. You think a fitter should sit at a bench and get a coolie to carry things on his shoulders to him?—A fitter may be sitting or standing, but he is not expected to bring a thing from a distance and place it somewhere else.

K-1541. You do not mind coolies doing that?—That is their job.

K-1542. You think it is all right for the coolies to be treated as beasts of burden, but you do not want the fitters to be so treated?—It is a coolie's duty to carry things from one place to another. Why should a fitter do it when there are coolies there.

*The Chairman* : I think it is a rhetorical phrase to emphasize the plea against discrimination.

K-1543. *Mr. Ahmed* : You desire to draw attention to the disparity between the wages paid to Indians and those paid to Europeans and Anglo-Indians?—(*Mr. Pathik*) : Yes. In Department No. 33 there is a man, an Anglo-Indian, ticket number 58-13, who was appointed on 25th May 1926 as a driller; the rate of a driller is 7 annas to start with, but he was given Rs. 1-8-0 from the very beginning. After one year his salary was increased to Rs. 3½. There is another instance. The starting pay of an Indian turner is 7 annas, but an Anglo-Indian was given Rs. 1-4-0, and now he is getting Rs. 3-4-0.

K-1544. Does the food of an Anglo-Indian cost more than that of an Indian?—I think Indians could also eat costly food if they could afford to buy it.

K-1545. What is the distance from the loco workshops to where the workers live?—Two to three miles.

K-1546. That is a great inconvenience for them, and therefore you expect the railway to provide accommodation for them?—Yes.

K-1547. You are complaining about the wages, and you have been asked to compare the wages paid on the railway with those paid elsewhere?—I think that basis is wrong. The question is whether a man can maintain himself properly on his wage.

K-1548. On the wages he gets from the railway he cannot maintain himself and his family?—No. That is why an Englishman of 35 years of age looks a young man of 20, but an Indian 35 years old looks like a man of 60.

K-1549. When the men get a holiday do they get any salary?—No.

K-1550. If they fall ill do they get their salary?—(*Mr. Sharma*) : No. In certain cases they get half pay for a time. (*Mr. Pathik*) : and they get dismissed in several cases.

K-1551. As a rule, if a worker is ill at home, does he get medical advice? Do the railway send the doctor to see him?—No. Even if the man goes to the hospital he is not properly attended.

K-1552. *The Chairman* : Are there 500 a day being treated in the railway dispensary?—That may be the number, but they have to take medicine also from native physicians to be cured.

K-1553. *Mr. Ahmed* : Do the railway accept certificates from a private doctor ?—Not from Indian doctors.

K-1554. With regard to pension, do you expect any pension if a man has served for 30 years ?—He gets a gratuity after retirement, but it is not sufficient. They pay at the rate of 15 months for 30 years service.

K-1555. Do you think the commodities supplied at the railway co-operative stores can be obtained cheaper in the market ?—They are about the same price.

K-1556. Do you expect them to be cheaper ?—Yes.

K-1557. *Col. Russell* : With regard to the average monthly wage, which, you say, should not be less than Rs 25, can you give us any information as to the amount which the average worker spends on food per month ?—(*Mr. Sharma*) : A worker with a family spends not less than Rs. 22 or 23 a month.

K-1558. Have you worked that out on bazaar rates ?—We took certain instances and made out a calculation from them.

K-1559. Can you let us have them ?—Yes.

K-1560. Is it a fact that the death rate is very high in the town ?—Yes. It is due to want of sanitation.

K-1561. Is that not a matter for the Municipality and not for the railway ?—Yes, but the railway can do something by providing quarters.

K-1562. You say that the medical authorities very often refuse to accept certificates from Indian native physicians, but in another of your statements you say you prefer medical officers with English qualifications. Why do you then say that certificates from native physicians should be accepted ?—These certificates are not accepted

K-1563. You would insist that they should be ?—Yes.

K-1564. Is it not a fact that the medical authorities now accept a large number of certificates signed by medical practitioners in Ajmer ?—They accept them from all registered doctors, but not from Indian physicians. Generally Indians like to go under the treatment of the native physicians.

K-1565. Is it a fact that from 500 to 600 men from the railway attend the hospital every morning for treatment ?—There is a number no doubt.

K-1566. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Do you maintain that they would prefer to go to the native physicians if they had a free choice ?—Yes.

K-1567. And that they merely go to the out-patients dispensary so that they can be registered as sick ?—Yes. They only go there to get their certificates. Mostly they go outside for their treatment.

*The Chairman* : I think we need not pursue this matter. It is quite clear.

K-1568. *Mr. Govind Prasad* : The majority of the people who inhabit Ajmer are railway employees ?—Yes.

K-1569. What treatment is given by the officers here if any union or federation is started?—The treatment generally given to the workers who join these unions and federations is not fair. In certain cases if a man joins the union he is watched very closely, and on very slight pretexts he is asked to leave.

K-1570. *Mr. Joshi* : Who watches him?—(*Mr. Pathik*) : Every official of the workshop.

K-1571. *Mr. Govind Prasad* : Have you heard anything about the general staff committee appointed by the railway?—Yes.

K-1572. They are in their memorandum : “ Almost all other departments of the Railway have already introduced staff committees or are taking steps to do so ”. What is the experience of the persons who have been on the staff committee?—(*Mr. Sharma*) : It would be much better for the secretary or the president of the staff committee to reply, but all I can say is that the workers’ demands and resolutions are mostly rejected.

K-1573. *Col. Gidney* : You state “ There is only one school for the children of Indian employees ”. Do I understand there is only one school for the children of Anglo-Indian employees?—Yes, but no Indian is admitted to the Anglo-Indian School.

K-1574. And no Anglo-Indian student is admitted to the Indian school?—They do not like to go. If they want they would be welcome.

K-1575. Is it true that in the case of the Anglo-Indian parent he has to pay the following school fees : first and second classes, Rs. 3-8-0; third and fourth classes, Rs. 5, and the fifth and sixth classes, Rs. 7, as compared with the fees which the Indian parent has to pay of 12 annas for the first and second classes, Rs. 1-8-0 for the third and fourth ; Rs. 2-4-0 for the fifth and sixth, and Rs. 3 for the seventh class?—We do not deal with that question.

K-1576. You make a very interesting suggestion about the insurance of limbs. Do you mean by that that any one who works with an electric welding apparatus should have his eyes insured and that any one who works with a saw should have his hands insured, and so on?—(*Mr. Pathik*) : Yes, that is what we mean.

*Mr. Cliff* : Is it not covered by the statement about adequate and fair compensation for the loss of a particular limb? The suggestion is that the compensation is not adequate.

K-1577. *Col. Gidney* : Is it your opinion that the staff committees are a failure?—Yes.

K-1578. A failure so far as the men are concerned?—Not only that, but so far as the attitude of the officials in regard to the redress of the grievances of the workers is concerned.

K-1579. Is it your experience that staff committees mainly consist of officials, and that the pressure of the officials on these committees is very great?—Yes. If the staff committee puts forward certain recommendations

to the authorities for their sanction or approval they are either rejected, or there is complete silence. As far as we are concerned, we have never looked upon a staff committee as a true representative body of workers.

K-1580. What would you suggest in its place ?—We suggest that the federations or representative bodies of workers, formed by themselves, should be recognized, and that the grievances put forward by them should be given a hearing.

K-1581. *Sir Ernest Jackson* : You say that your membership is 3,500. That is roughly one-third of the total employees in the railway carriage shops and loco shops. If your contention is correct, that you represent one-third of the labourers there, how is it that you have not asked the railway to recognize your union ?—We have already stated that once we wrote, but no reply was received.

K-1582. I think I can say that no letter has been received ?—The letter was written by my predecessor, and as far as I am concerned I wrote two letters to the Wagon Superintendent, but I had no reply.

K-1583. In this revised memorandum you have set out a lot of grievances. You represent a union which you say has a membership of 3,500. Therefore this memorandum, I take it, is supposed to represent the views and grievances of the men themselves. Have all the points in this memorandum been explained to the men, and do they agree with every point ?—(*Mr. Sharma*) : Yes ; in fact the grievances and points have been got from the men. We have information in the vernacular which they sent to us and which we translated into English.

K-1584. You did not hold a general meeting ?—(*Mr. Pathik*) : We got this information from the workers.

K-1585. One from one worker and another from another ?—Yes, and also by holding meetings.

K-1586. You stated that staff committees were not a success. What is your experience of staff committees. How do you know they are not a success ?—Because they have recently resolved to dissolve the Committee.

K-1587. To which staff committee do you particularly refer ?—The carriage and wagon.

K-1588. *Mr. Gregory* : This morning the Commission saw a technical school in the loco shops, but you state in your memorandum that the present employees are not allowed any facility for vocational or industrial training. Were you aware of the existence of that technical school in the loco shops ?—That is meant for apprentices entirely, and not for the employees.

K-1589. *Mrs. Tara Martin* : What medical facilities are provided for the families of Indian workmen ?—There is only one native nurse. She generally goes to certain localities seeing the children.

K-1590. Have they not got wards for Indian women at the railway hospitals ?—No, not a single one.

K-1591. No maternity ward ?—No, for Indian women there is none.

K-1592. Then where do they go ? Do they go to these mission hospitals, or where ?—They go to the mission hospital.

K-1593. There are no special arrangements for the women ?—No.

K-1594. Is there a great shortage of houses for working people in Ajmer ?—Yes.

K-1595. What do you suggest as a remedy ?—It is for the railway either to provide quarters or to make loans to the workers for them to build their own houses. Such loans could easily be repaid by deductions by monthly instalments; that should be very easy. The rate of interest should be very low, because they are doing something for the railway who ought to provide houses for their workmen; when the workmen are themselves spending their own money and saving the railway this trouble, the rate of interest should be very low and the instalments should be the easiest possible and should be such that a man may easily be able to pay them.

K-1596. *Miss Power* : You were referring just now to shortage of housing accommodation; is there a shortage of houses for the coolie grade of labour or for the better paid worker ?—(*Mr. Sharma*) : For the workers all round

K-1597. It is stated in the evidence of the railway company that there is ample accommodation to be obtained in the town for the artisan class ?—Yes, they get houses, but the rents are exorbitant.

K-1598. Your point is that the houses are there, but they cannot afford to occupy them ?—Those houses are not built by the railway; they are privately owned houses.

K-1599. You say in your memorandum that there is only one school for the children of the Indian employees ?—Yes.

K-1600. Are you there referring to primary or higher education ?—Primary only; in fact that is lower primary, not primary.

K-1601. Are there other schools in the town to which the children of the railway employees can go ?—There are other schools.

K-1602. Are there more children of the railway workers for whom education is required than can be housed in the schools available, whether they are municipal or railway schools ?—The situation of the school is such that most of the children of the railway employees cannot come; they would like to come.

K-1603. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : The distance is too great; is that so ?—Yes. (*Mr. Pathik*) : The children would have to walk two or three miles.

K-1604. *Mr. Joshi* : You make a complaint about the recruitment of Anglo-Indians and Christians. I want to know what is your exact point of complaint. Is it your point that a lower qualification is accepted with regard to an Anglo-Indian or a Christian than with regard to an Indian seeking employment ?—(*Mr. Sharma*) : That is so. They admit persons who have reached the 6th standard of the European schools, while they require matriculates from the Indian Universities and schools.

K-1605. Is it also one of your points about recruitment that Anglo-Indians are generally started on a higher grade than the Indian?—Yes, they are.

K-1606. What will an Indian, say a matriculate, be started on, and what will an Anglo-Indian of similar education be started on?—Are you referring to the clerical staff?

K-1607. Both clerical and workshop staff?—They should both be started on not less than Rs. 75 or Rs. 80. At present an Indian is started on Rs. 40 while an Anglo-Indian is started on Rs. 65, Rs. 75 or even Rs. 80.

K-1608. Does it also happen with regard to promotion that an Anglo-Indian rises quicker than an Indian?—Yes, because they are started on higher salaries and they naturally get higher promotion.

K-1609. But quite part from the higher starting pay, supposing an Indian and an Anglo-Indian are started on Rs. 75 each, will they reach Rs. 150 at the same time?—No, the Anglo-Indian will take a shorter time.

K-1610. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is there any difference in the intelligence of the two people?—I do not think so.

*The Chairmen* : That is a matter of opinion. It is a question of aptitude rather than intelligence.

K-1611. *Mr. Joshi* : You have complained about the quarters and have said that the Anglo-Indians are given more comfortable quarters. Do most of the Anglo-Indians get quarters from the railway?—Yes, most of them do; there is always some scheme going on to erect quarters for them.

K-1612. Is it also your complaint that the houses provided for the Anglo-Indians are more comfortable than the houses provided for the Indians of the same grade?—In the first place, there are no houses provided for the Indians. In other departments where they are provided, the accommodation I should say is insufficient.

K-1613. Indians are not generally provided with accommodation?—The workers I mean; in the engineering department the Indians do have quarters but they are small.

K-1614. Do you mean that Indians and Anglo-Indians of the same grade are provided with different types of houses?—In the case of the workers, Indians of the same grade and pay will not be provided with any quarters.

K-1615. *The Chairman* : If an Indian were building his own house, would he build the same kind of house for himself as an Anglo-Indian would?—I could not follow that clearly.

K-1616. *Mr. Joshi* : Is the Workmen's Compensation Act worked to the satisfaction of the workmen?—No.

K-1617. What is your grievance about it?—The amount given is very small. I can quote one instance: suppose a man of 25 years of age dies from an accident in the workshop, he is paid Rs. 2,500. He may leave a large family: how can that large family manage to carry on with Rs. 2,500.

K-1618. You were asked some questions about Indians being treated with contempt. Are there any cases in your workshop where the Foremen or officers roughly handle the workmen?—If you wish, persons can be brought before the Commission, but they would not like to come here before their officers, because they are always afraid of being given the sack if they say anything against their officials. There are cases, not one, but many.

K-1619. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : You say in your memorandum that men are retrenched and retired. You make the statement : “ The only visible cause of such unemployment is due to the abolition of manufacturing coaches, wagons and locomotives. Finished articles are being imported from home ; thus great retrenchment. Manufacturing of finished articles should be restored ”. Is it your suggestion that, whether these finished articles can be economically manufactured here or not, their manufacture here should be restored in order to provide employment?—I think they could be manufactured more economically here.

K-1620. I am glad to hear that. You allege that though the railway authorities could have continued to manufacture these articles at a cost lower than the imported cost, they stopped the manufacture here?—(*Mr. Pathik*) : In the Great War period many things were manufactured here in these workshops and so they can also be manufactured here now.

K-1621. Have you anything to show that the abolition of this manufacture was due to any cause other than economic?—We have not got the statistics in our hands.

K-1622. Your position, I understand, is that if this had continued, unemployment would not have resulted, and therefore the fact whether it could be carried on economically or not was not to be considered?—No ; if we can rely upon the information we have, the impression left by it is that these things are imported from England simply to assist the home industry.

K-1623. That may be your view, but what I want to know is : can you tell us anything in support of the statement you make that these finished articles can be manufactured in India by the railway authorities at a lower cost ; have you anything to prove that?—(*Mr. Sharma*) : Because they were being manufactured here so long ; that proves that they can be manufactured here. (*Mr. Pathik*) : If it is in the interests of the workers in this country, why should they not take the risk of some loss?

K-1624. That is to say they should manufacture these articles here even at a loss in order to provide employment?—It should not be taken for granted that it would be at a loss

*The Chairman* : You come before us as representatives of the workers not as high railway technical experts.

*The witness (Mr. Pathik)* : We have some other statements.

*The Chairman* : We will consider them if you will hand them in.

*The witness* : May I ask the Commission to visit the Jonesgung Colony.

*The Chairman* : We will consider that. I understand there is a case at present under consideration before the Courts.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**Mr. H. ARMITSTEAD, M.B.E., V.D.,** Carriage and Wagon Superintendent, Metre Gauge, Ajmer ; **Mr. E. C. H. CONDON, V.D.,** Engineer-in-Chief, Metre Gauge, Ajmer ; **Mr. C. G. Cotesworth, V.D.,** Acting Locomotive Superintendent, Metre Gauge, Ajmer ; **Colonel H. F. HOBBS, D.S.O., M.C.,** Staff Officer, representing the Bombay Baroda and Central India Railway.

*The Chairman* : I think perhaps we may put our questions and one or other may answer as they fall within your respective spheres. There are certain larger questions of policy which come within our sphere of investigation ; I take it that those in the main we shall have to deal with in Bombay rather than here.

K-1625. We shall ask questions therefore in particular with regard to administration in Ajmer. In your memorandum you refer to the preference given to sons, brothers and sons-in-law of railway workers. Am I to understand that you have a slightly easier standard for relatives than you have for outsiders ; because at one place you use the phrase "studied up to matriculation", while in dealing with outsiders you say "passed matriculation". Does "studied up to matriculation" mean that they may not have passed ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : Yes.

K-1626. That is to say, there is a slightly easier qualification for relatives than for new-comers ?—That is so.

K-1627. With regard to your provident societies, provision for old age and death, am I to understand from the comparison you make between your rules and those of State railways that your rules are slightly more favourable to the worker than the State rules ?—That is so

K-1628. With regard to co-operative societies, we are interested to see the very substantial effort which has been made under the name of the Jackson Co-operative Credit Society to meet the needs of your workers in respect of credit, and also, I am glad to see, in connection with savings. Can you give the Commission any information as to how far you have been able to relieve your workers from the attentions of the *bania* ; I mean how far has your work resulted in men being freed from debt, which oppresses so many people in India ?—(*Col. Hobbs*) : Yes, I think that is so to this extent, that we have during the last 6 months, alone, *i.e.* since the publication of the last balance sheet, loaned something like 17½ lakhs of rupees to our workers. That will ease them in this way, that whereas they paid to the co-operative credit society roughly 8½ to 9½ per cent. interest, they would be paying to the *bania* anything, from our experience, from, say, 50 to 150 per cent.

K-1629. Yes, but to a certain type of man it might appear to be merely another source from which he could raise money ?—My point is : does the establishment of these co-operative credit societies have the result that the men will pay up the *bania* and get clear of these debts at high rates of interest, and borrow only from your co-operative societies when they are compelled to borrow ?—That is the aim and we believe that it is so. We



believe that in a great many cases when these men borrow money from the co-operative credit society, they do pay off the debts to the *bania* so far as they are able. We know definitely that in many cases they do not again fall into the clutches of the money-lender.

K-1630. It would be interesting to the Commission if you could support that statement by chapter and verse ; I do not know whether that would be possible in some selected instances ?—I have no doubt I could find instances of that.

K-1631. Because the sweeping statement is sometimes made that there is scarcely a man in India who is not in debt to the *bania* ?—I should say from our experience of the men on this railway, certainly 80 to 90 per cent. of the men are in debt to the money-lender.

K-1632. But would you give salvation even to the 10 per cent. who are free men ?—Yes, 10 per cent. are not in the hands of the *bania*.

K-1633. That is something. If you are able to give us just a few individual cases which would show us how some men have been able to free themselves entirely from the money-lender with the help of your co-operative society, it would be useful to us ?—Yes, I can do that perfectly easily, because we deal with these loans in two ways. Certain of the borrowers do not come to us and request our help in liquidating their debts. They are entitled to take these loans without doing so. On the other hand, others do, and in those cases we do liquidate their debt and free these people. I can give instances of those cases.

K-1634. With regard to what you say in your memorandum as to staff committees, am I to take it also that your appointment as staff officer of the Company is a recent one ?—Very recent—since March of this year.

K-1635. Then I take it you are charged over your railway with somewhat similar duties to those of the newly appointed member of the Railway Board dealing with staff personnel ?—I am not competent to say.

K-1636. Will you tell the Commission shortly since you took up your duties what your work has been ?—My work has been to a great extent confined to dealing with unions and matters brought up by the union officials. Also I attend to staff grievances, and in the case of appeals referred to the Agent I investigate them and put my investigations before the Agent. In addition to that, I look after staff welfare in the matter of these loan societies and other similar matters.

K-1637. You generally attend to the welfare of the workers on the human side of their employment ?—That is so.

K-1638. Have you any knowledge of the staff committee which has just been referred to here in Ajmer ?—No, not a wide knowledge.

K-1639. Perhaps one of the other officers could answer my question on that ?—(Mr. Armitstead) : The staff committee referred to was my staff committee in the carriage and wagon shops.

K-1640. Do you agree with the statement which has been made ?—I have found my staff committee very useful. Personally I would prefer to

deal directly with the staff, but I certainly have found my staff committee very useful.

K-1641. Useful in what sense ?—In putting up general things which might not be put up to me through foremen in the ordinary course.

K-1642. That is to say, little grievances have reached you through that staff committee of which you might not otherwise have been aware ?—That is quite correct.

K-1643. And have in that way found their remedy ?—Sometimes it was not within my power to remedy them ; but whenever it has been, I have always tried to remedy them.

K-1644. Have you any idea as to what percentage of the troubles are those which would come in your province to remedy ?—No, I cannot give you any figures now ; I have the whole of the minutes of the staff committee here, and I will have the figures worked out and submit them to you

K-1645. How long has the staff committee been functioning ?—About 8 months I think it is.

K-1646. Are the members of that staff committee elected in the shop ?—Yes.

K-1647. By free election ?—Each shop elects its own delegates ; they have a meeting and they elect their own delegates.

K-1648. Have you heard anything about the members of that staff committee resigning or threatening to resign ?—Yes, they did send in their resignation and they asked me to send it on to the Agent. They said they found a lack of co-operation between the officers and themselves. However, I did not send it on to the Agent. We talked things over and afterwards they asked to be allowed to withdraw the resolution. I said : “ No, I am afraid you cannot withdraw the resolution ; it is on the file ; but if you like, at the next meeting you can put up another resolution cancelling it or modifying it.”

K-1649. I suppose you have the experience of the rest of us in all spheres, that not every thing that everybody asks for can be granted ?—Exactly ; and yet they told me that the demands they put in were the minimum.

*The Chairman* : You must not be too much worried about that ; that is rather a common experience ; after all, they, like the rest of us, are human.

K-1650. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : This branch here of the railway used to make engines during the war ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : Yes, it still does.

K-1651. But your programme is reduced ?—(*Mr. Cotesworth*) : The building is reduced. During the war we accumulated a staff concentrated on the manufacture of munitions, and since the war we have been gradually reducing down to a lower figure. We have been reducing the surplus staff ; our output is about the same.

K-1652. Are the engines you are buying from Home in addition to your usual programme ?—It is in accordance with our building programme, but we are purchasing at Home as opposed to building them here.

K-1653. Am I to take it that if you did not purchase from Home you would have to increase your machinery here for the purpose of output ?—No, we could build here.

K-1654. With your existing plant ?—Yes.

K-1655. You could get a bigger output ?—Yes.

K-1656. Then your output is the same as it was in the past ?—Yes.

K-1657. And the reduction of staff was reduction of surplus staff ?—Yes.

K-1658. You could increase your output with the same plant, but it would mean an increased staff ?—Yes.

K-1659. How do your costing figures work out with regard to the engines you produce here and the engines you import ; are they the same type of engines ?—No, not altogether ; they are a slightly different type. Our costing figures compared with Germany are very much on the same lines, but they are very much lower than those purchased at Home.

K-1660. Then you can produce at about the same price as you buy in Germany ?—Yes, we can really now.

K-1661. Are these costing figures your latest ones ?—Yes.

K-1662. When these engines were ordered from Germany by the Railway Board were the figures before the Board such as would indicate that if they had given you the order they would not have paid more than if they ordered from Germany ?—Yes.

K-1663. Is the quality of your engines as good as the imported engines ?—I think it is.

K-1664. It has been said that the cost of your engines was low owing to a method of accounting, that is to say, that a larger proportion of the overheads was put on to the repairs section so that your repair costs are higher than on other railways, and it is due to that that you are able to show a low cost for your new engines. Is there any truth in that ?—A special accountant was sent down when we were building the last lot of engines, and he found it was not so.

K-1665. Then the cost of your repair work is not higher than in other railway works ?—No, I do not think it is much. The number of repairs executed in the shops is based on the tractive effort of the engines. To my mind it does not give one a fair figure if one has a certain number of older engines of a very low tractive effort.

K-1666. I take it these are metre gauge engines ?—Yes.

K-1667. Do you say there is no reason why any further orders for metre gauge engines should be placed outside India as you are capable of doing it ?—I consider we are.

K-1668. *The Chairman* : You refer to standard engines ?—Yes.

K-1669. Are they the same as the ones you have been buying from England ?—England, Germany and Switzerland.

K-1670. What exactly is meant by standard engines ?—It is the design of engine laid down by the Indian Railways Standards Committee ; they are not our design at all ; they are a standard design.

K-1671. Is the object of getting them from Europe that you may have that standard on which to base your future work in the Indian shops ?—Presumably it is, because I suppose they want to make that a standard engine throughout India.

K-1672. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : We have been told by a previous witness that the rates of pay, particularly of the lowest class, the coolie class, are lower than are paid in the surrounding districts ; they say you are paying 6 annas a day as against Rs. 1-4-0 a day ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : The daily rate for coolies is from 7 to 11 annas a day, with a special grade at 14 annas a day. That is on daily pay.

K-1673. And what is paid outside ?—I do not know. I give my garden coolie Rs. 12 a month. When we fix a rate, the loco superintendent and carriage and wagon superintendent fix the rate according to what we can get coolies for.

K-1674. You do not argue whether it is a prevailing rate or not ?—We do not make enquiries from other concerns round here.

K-1675. You do not know whether the rate for a coolie in the surrounding district is higher than what you are paying ?—No.

K-1676. Is there any reason why you should anticipate that there should be a large surplus of unskilled coolie labour in this district ?—The last time when we took on some 25 coolies was about 2 months ago, and 40 or 50 men collected outside the shop looking for employment.

K-1677. Then there is a good deal of unemployment ?—Only in certain seasons of the year.

K-1678. That is to say, outside the harvest time ?—Yes.

K-1679. You say wages are paid after a delay varying from 1 to 25 days. I understand the Railway Board is very anxious that such delays should be minimized as far as possible throughout the railway system. Would you find administrative difficulty in shortening that period ?—It would cost us a good deal more. At present we close the pay bill of the shop on the 20th of the month and on the 6th or 7th of the following month we start to pay out. These pay bills have to go down to Bombay to be pre-audited.

K-1680. It is really the pre-auditing that takes the extra time ?—Yes ; but, of course, if we were to pay them weekly, it would cost us more in the shops.

K-1681. I am not suggesting at the moment that you should change your monthly system of payment to a weekly system. I am merely asking

whether you could expedite your time of payment ?—It is entirely a matter of audit.

K-1682. *Mr. Cliff* : Assuming that you decide to pay wages weekly, apart from the question of audit, is there any practical difficulty here ?—I am sure it is going to cost a great deal more.

K-1683. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Could you say how much ?—I could not say how much. You see the men are paid in the company's time ; and it takes about two or three hours to do each shop. We have not got a very good system of making payment. On the North Western Railway we had a very good system ; we paid 5,000 men in about 20 minutes. I should like to adopt that system here, but unfortunately I have not enough space in the shop ; you have to get all the men in parallel lines one behind the other, and then you can get them through in 20 minutes.

K-1684. There are constructional difficulties ?—Yes.

K-1685. That is apart from the question of pay clerks ?—Yes. The pay clerks would have to come every week instead of once a month.

K-1686. You might want more pay clerks to speed it up ?—Yes.

K-1687. You would require structural alterations ?—Yes

K-1688. Your equipment, in other words, is inefficient ?—Yes.

K-1689. And it would be expensive to alter that equipment ?—Yes.

K-1690. In your memorandum you say there are no trade combinations among the employees of this railway, that unsuccessful efforts have been made to form such combinations. Could you tell us the form those efforts took ?—No, I do not deal with that at all.

K-1691. Is there anybody here who knows about it ?—(*Colonel Hobbs*) : I am not in a position to reply to that question.

K-1692. Are your credit societies limited to certain classes of workmen ?—No.

K-1693. Do you mean that a coolie could join it if he wanted to ?—Anybody can.

K-1694. It does not matter whether he is on monthly wages or daily wages ?—It makes not the slightest difference.

K-1695. He can get credit ?—Yes.

K-1696. This is most interesting, because we have been told on other railways that it is not feasible to give credit to a daily workman because it is impossible to keep a hold on him. How do you overcome that difficulty ?—By sureties.

K-1697. But I take it that the sureties are of the same class of daily worker ?—No the sureties must be of the permanent staff.

K-1698. In practice have you any daily workmen who have borrowed money from your credit society ?—I believe so, but I would rather refer that question to Bombay.

K-1699. Because you will admit it might be very difficult for a coolie to get two workmen of higher type on monthly wages to act as sureties ?—Yes ; the same thing might apply to a gangman, who is also a very low paid man, but he can get sureties.

K-1700. He is on monthly wages ?—Yes.

K-1701. And you have therefore got a certain amount of security ?—Yes, but very small.

K-1702. You have the wages at the end of the month from which you can make deductions ?—Yes.

K-1703. Whereas in the case of a daily paid man, it might be more difficult. Do you make a daily deduction or a monthly deduction ?—Monthly.

K-1704. Is the daily rated man paid monthly ?—Yes.

K-1705. And you have still got a month's pay from which you can make deductions ?—Yes.

K-1706. The only difference would be the rate of pay ?—Yes. He is entitled to take up a loan to the extent of 6 months' pay.

K-1707. What does a gangman get ?—That varies over the line. The lowest paid men vary from Roughly Rs. 13-8-0 to Rs. 26. Gangmen have been put, if I may say so, in a privileged class at the moment ; it is a matter of simplicity for them to get sureties in the big centres, but it is sometimes very difficult for gangmen who are spread out over the line to find sureties. For that reason the co-operative society recently in order to assist the gangmen made certain concessions in that regard ; all that the gangmen needs are two sureties of 5 years' service ; the man standing as surety may be any one, fellow gangman or anybody else.

K-1708. So that his sureties may be earning Rs. 13-8-0 just as he is ?—Yes.

K-1709. Have you made any losses in respect of loans to these lower paid men ?—Yes, but the losses are astoundingly small. Even with this enormous turnover of loans running into 30 or 40 lakhs in a year, the actual losses to the society are extremely small ; they run to possibly, a few hundred rupees.

K-1710. Would it be possible to take out the number of loans made to men earning say Rs. 20 or less ?—Yes, very easy.

K-1711. And could you give me the losses in regard to loans made to that class ?—That would be simple.

*The Chairman* : Perhaps that might be included in the note for which I asked.

K-1712. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Then I take it you see no difficulty in extending the privileges of these credit societies to your lowest paid class ?—No. The risks may be slightly greater, but not excessively greater. The gangmen form a very considerable proportion of the

whole railway staff. These special concessions were not granted to them until the beginning of this year, so that we really had very little working experience of it; but ordinarily speaking, the amount of bad debts incurred by defaulters during the year is very small. When I say bad debts, I mean actual cash loss to the society.

K-1713. You might work out the percentage of defaulters in the lower class men compared with the total average ?—Yes.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : I am speaking of actual loss to the society ; as long as the loan is recovered from the borrower or the sureties, the society does not mind.

K-1714. *Sir Alexander Murray* : With regard to the engineering department, in your memorandum you say wages are generally fixed according to the market rate prevailing in the locality. In another place it is stated that wages are fixed in relation to the cost of living. What does it really mean ?—(*Mr. Condon*) : The class for which it is fixed at market rates are the technical staff, the carpenters, blacksmiths and workshop staff generally. The other statement refers to the gangmen, who are scattered up and down the line ; we fix their wages as far as we can in relation to their cost of living.

K-1715 : Have you any figures to show what is the cost of living of gangmen ?—(*Colonel Hobbs*) : We have collected a few score actual budgets in their entirety : these domestic budgets include every possible item that could enter into the cost of living ; we have possibly hundreds of actual figures in books which are more or less approximate but which we ourselves take to be practically accurate ; that is to say, the budgets have not been prepared in the specific form which we employ for the purpose. The result is practically the same.

K-1716. What is the main factor that influences you in fixing rates ; is it the rates payable in the locality or the cost of living ?—I can only speak as to that in respect of the line staff ; in that regard it was the cost of living which was taken into consideration when recent advances in pay were sanctioned.

K-1717. Can you produce to us any statistics on which you base your position ?—I can.

*The Chairman* : We should like to have that.

K-1718. I understand certain figures were put forward to the Railway Board on which the recent advance was granted ?—The figures were collected and placed before the Agent for his consideration. These figures are contained in the budget statements.

K-1719. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you any means of knowing what are the wages paid to agricultural workers in the vicinity of Ajmer ?—No.

K-1720. In the Government memorandum we have the statement that the average daily wages of an agricultural worker is about 4 annas. What would you say as to that ?—(*Mr. Condon*) : I do not know what the average wage of an agricultural labourer is : it varies a great deal.

K-1721. What is the average daily wage of your average workman in your shops ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : In the carriage and wagon shop the present average wage per man per day is 22 annas.

K-1722. *The Chairman* : That is the average running over the whole ?—Yes.

K-1723. Does that include Foremen ?—No, only labour.

K-1724. *Sir Alexander Murray* : That is a workman drawing less than Rs. 2 a day ?—All labour on a daily rate in the carriage and wagon shops. For the loco department the average wage per man per day is Rs. 1-6-10.

K-1725. That is practically 23 annas ?—Yes.

K-1726. Could you tell us what the average was in 1914 before the war broke out and in 1919 after the war ended ?—In the loco. shops in 1914 the average rate was 10 annas par day. In 1914 for carriage and wagon shops the average was 8 annas per day per man ; in 1919 it was 10½ annas ; it is now 22 annas. I have not got the figure for the loco shops at the end of the war.

K-1727. I see that in this Government memorandum to which you have already referred us, it says that in the two big railway workshops in Ajmer the average daily wage of an Indian adult workman for an 8-hour day is 22 annas ; that is the figure you have given us ?—Yes.

K-1728. It says it has trebled since 1914 and more than doubled since 1919. There is a lot of detail in your appendix A but it is not easy to draw any conclusion from it. Could you give us a statement of the different classes of workers, in thousands of workers, showing what they were drawing in 1914, before the war broke out, in 1919 after the war had ended, and to-day ?

*The Chairman* : Is there any dispute on that point ; do not all the figures we have had submitted to us show about the same difference between the present time and 1914, namely, roughly an increase of 110 per cent. ? We have to remember the Railway Board figures. What struck me at the time was the close parallel to railway wages in England as to which I believe the figure is about the same.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : If it is accepted what the Railway Board said to us, that the overhead average of these wages has gone up 124 per cent. since the war broke out, I will not pursue the point.

K-1729. *Mr. Cliff* : With regard to grain compensation allowance, the Bombay people for their workshops at Parel are able to show the minimum rates divided between skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled. Have you any distinction like that ?—No, I have no hard dividing line.

K-1730. Have they in Parel ?—I believe they have.

K-1731. What is your grain compensation allowance here in addition to the wages paid ?—I do not know what a man is earning unless you



include grain compensation allowance ?—The grain compensation here is the same as it is in Bombay, but it is not very often given. When I first came to Ajmer we had grain shops. Since then I cannot remember how many times we have given grain compensation. It was last given some months ago.

K-1732. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Under the heading of efficiency you say operations throughout the railway workshops have been re-organized in recent years but it is doubtful if the personal efficiency of the worker has been improved. Under the head of engineering staff you definitely make the statement that efficiency has not improved in recent years ?—*(Mr. Condon)* : The remark about the engineering staff is with regard to broad gauge.

K-1733. There is nothing here to show that ?—No, there is not, but it is so.

K-1734. You differentiate between your metre gauge and the broad gauge ?—Yes.

K-1735. The broad gauge people say it has not improved in recent years ; what do you say ?—I say the same ; I think the efficiency of the gangmen is the same as it has been during the last 20 years.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : But surely the efficiency of the railways as a whole must have materially improved in the last few years.

*The Chairman* : There is a difference between the efficiency per unit and the efficiency of the organization.

K-1736. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What do you say about your workshop staff ?—I think the efficiency of the carpenters and blacksmiths is just the same as it was 20 years ago.

K-1737. To-day I saw some very good work being done both in the carpenters' shops and in some of the other shops ; do you think that has improved, or do you suggest the efficiency is as high as you could reasonably expect and it is no higher than it was 20 years ago ?—*(Mr. Armitstead)* : The efficiency of my men is considerably higher ?  
*(Mr. Condon)* : The carriage and wagon department requires a much higher standard of work than my department.

K-1738. Do you mean to tell me that the efficiency of the type of worker who is making your railway engines here has not improved out of all recognition compared with what it was 22 years ago ?—I know nothing of the efficiency of the loco. shop ; I am the Chief Engineer of the maintenance department which employs the gangmen.

*Mr. Cliff* : A great many men on the permanent way are employed for physique and not for skill. With regard to the carriage and wagon shops I understand the efficiency has improved.

K-1739. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What about the loco shops ?—*(Mr. Cotesworth)* : I consider the efficiency has increased.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## (RAILWAYS)

## Sixteenth Meeting

AJMER.

Thursday, 12th November, 1929.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

The Right Hon'ble V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI, P.C. | Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

Sir VICOTR SASSOON, Bart. | Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, Kt. | Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.  
K.C.S.I., C.I.E. | Miss B. M. LE POER POTTER.Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., | Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
C.B.E. | I.M.S., (*Medical Assessor*).

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S. |

Sir ERNEST JACKSON, Kt., C.I.E.,  
Agent, B., B. and C. I. Railway,  
Company Limited. |Lt.-Col. H. A. J. GIDNEY, M.L.A. }  
Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E. } *Assistant Commissioners.*  
Mr. GOVIND PRASAD. }Mr. TARA MATRIN, *Lady Assessor.*Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S. }  
Mr. A. DIBDIN. } *Joint Secretaries.*

Mr. H. ARMITSTEAD, M.B.E., V.D., Carriage and Wagon Superintendent, Metre Gauge, Ajmer ; Mr. E. C. H. CONDON, V.D., Engineer-in-Chief, Metre Gauge, Ajmer ; Mr. C. G. COTESWORTH, V.D., Acting Locomotive Superintendent, Metre Gauge, Ajmer ; and Colonel H. F. HOBBS, D.S.O., M.C., Staff Officer, representing the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, re-called and further examined.

K-1740. *Mr. Ahmed* : Have you any experience of agricultural labour in the villages ?—(*Mr. Condon*) : Not outside the railways.

K-1741. You know that in industrial towns like Ajmer and Delhi cost of living is more than in villages ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : Presumably

K-1742. So that a labourer in industrial towns like Ajmer, Delhi, Calcutta or Bombay has to spend more than he would in the villages ?—Yes.

K-1743. In villages he gets a free supply of fuel, and rice is cheaper ; he is not required to pay any rent for his accommodation. As far as your establishment is concerned you do not provide them with quarters ?—We supply to a limited extent, for the *Chowkidars*.

K-1743a. I am not referring to *Chowkidars* ; I am referring to the real workers who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. You told us yesterday that these people can be relieved from the clutches of the money-lenders if co-operative societies are started on a larger scale and money is advanced to them ?—That is so.

K-1744. If weekly system of payment is introduced I suppose they can pay their debt quicker ?—(*Col. Hobbs*) : I do not think that has anything to do with the co-operative society.

K-1745. Are there any cases in which a co-operative society pays off the complete debt to the *bania* ?—There are many cases where the co-operative society completely liquidates the debt of a member of the staff. In fact that is part of its business, or rather it is part of the business of one of the members of my staff, who is called an investigator, appointed specially for the purpose. Under certain conditions we make loans to certain classes of our staff, under which it is incumbent upon them to utilize that money for the specific purpose of liquidating their debts with the money-lender. That is completely under my control and we have been very successful. It is more or less a recent innovation, but so far it has been completely successful and has added greatly to the benefit of the staff concerned.

K-1746. And I dare say if you start these co-operative societies on a large scale you can get them out of the clutches of the *bania* and give them relief ?—Yes, certainly ; it depends entirely on how the money which has been borrowed is used. If the money is used for the specific purpose of liquidating a man's debts and transferring these debts from the *bania* to the co-operative societies, the man naturally stands to gain enormously by it, inasmuch as while he has to pay the money-lender interest on an average of 2 annas per rupee per month, or in other words Rs. 150 per cent., he is able to transfer that debt to his co-operative society, from whom he borrows the same amount of money at an interest of from  $7\frac{1}{2}$  to 8 per cent. five per cent. is face value, but it actually works out, spreading it over the various instalments to something like  $8\frac{1}{2}$  to  $9\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum.

K-1747. I take it for granted that if you advance money to all these various workers who are in the clutches of these *banias* you will be successful in your organization and in increasing the scope of its advancement. and bring relief to these poor people who may be in debt ?—I will put it to you this way. We have certainly succeeded in liquidating the debts of the staff in a great many cases ; and we have further succeeded in saving them from 20 to 60 per cent. of the actual debts themselves.

K-1748. So in the long run if you enlarge scope, I dare say all these workers will be out of the clutches of these *banias* ?—They would be if the liquidation rested with the Railway Company staff ; but even if that were done, there is no absolute certainty that these same people will not get into debt again. But we view the situation in this way : even if we save a proportion of these people and get them completely out of the hands of the money-lender we are doing our job.

K-1749. If these people are given good housing accommodation, and medical assistance, if they are given recreation and lovely playgrounds and good education, night schools, I suppose these people can improve their position ?—Yes.

K-1750. And they can facilitate the amelioration of their condition rapidly and with the advance of money that you can give them can improve their condition more quickly ?—I should say so.

K-1751. I understand that before this Commission was formed, probably five or six months ago, a number of apprentices in the carriage, workshops in the B., B. & C. I. Railway who had worked for four or five years in the hope of getting employment, were asked to vacate because you could not get employment for them. You wanted to pay them off for the time they had served their apprenticeship in your workshops ?—(Mr. Armitstead) : That is quite correct. We had a number of apprentices coming out of their time and we could not find any positions for them, and I told them that I would keep them on and would give them the maximum rate, that is, Rs. 2-10-0 per day, and that in case of a vacancy occurring we would consider their cases. Some of them accepted and some of them did not.

K-1752. Because you offered to pay them at the rate of Rs. 2-10-0. Those who were very poor accepted Rs. 2-10-0 ; the others asked for more ?—An Anglo-Indian accepted it.

K-1753. On Rs. 5 per day ?—No, on Rs. 2-10-0 per day.

K-1754. I understand the Anglo-Indians were getting much more than the Indians, and still there is a disturbance going on that the terms of the appointment were not satisfied ?—We never guarantee appointments to apprentices. It depends upon a vacancy. As a matter of fact those two lads who had left the shop because they would not accept Rs. 2-10-0 per day, came to me again the other day, and told me that they had heard that we were appointing supervisors by promoting apprentices. I told them I would give them another chance and would pay them Rs. 2-10-0 per day till the end of the year and if we were satisfied with their work and a job was going we would consider their cases again.

K-1755. But as a matter of fact you appointed a number of them very recently, just a few days before the Commission arrived at a lower wage than you were paying previously. Is not that correct—that you have appointed a few days ago some of these at a low rate of salary ?—I gave them the same pay, *viz.*, Rs. 2-10-0 per day till the end of the year ; and I said that if they proved themselves efficient and I had a position for them I would consider their cases again.

K-1756. *Mr. Cliff* : I just want first of all to take the locomotive and carriage and wagon shops and, if possible, to find out in respect of these two shops, (1) the number of men that are employed on 11 annas and under per day, (2) the number of men employed on between 11 annas and up to and including 22 annas per day ; and (3) the number of men employed on between 22 annas and Rs. 2-10-0 per day. Rs. 2-10-0 I understand is the ordinary maximum ; it does not include the special rate ?—No, it is the ordinary maximum.\*

K-1757. Would it be possible to give the numbers under these three categories and then, in addition, to give the total number of men employed in shops ?—Certainly.

K-1758. Can we also in respect of these shops have the information as to the dates when there has been a general revision of wages since 1914 and the amount of the increases ?—You want the rate of increase year by year ?

K-1759. I notice in your figures you have got a large number of men who have gone up on incremental advance. I want to find out whether there has been any general revision of wages, that is, taking the whole of these two shops ?—From 1919 to 1920 there was a very big rise—about 50 per cent. increase of pay.

K-1760. Can you tell the Commission of the actual dates between 1914 and now when there has been a general revision of wages and the amount of that general revision ?—I think so.

K-1761. In your memorandum, the minimum rate for a machineman is given as 7 annas and the maximum rate, excluding the special rate, as Rs. 1-4-0. It also shows that you have the same rate for a mason. Between the minimum and the maximum rates what are the periods when increments are given ?—Generally they are given annually.

K-1762. Is there any question in regard to the grant of these annual increments ? Are they given automatically or are they dependent on improved skill ?—They depend upon improved skill and good conduct. No employee can claim an increment as a matter of right.

K-1763. Confining ourselves for the moment to these grades, can you tell us whether it is possible to receive an incremental advance for improved skill under 12 months ?—It is possible, yes. A new hand may be re-rated ; he may have started on a small wage but after a time he may show considerable improvement, and then it is possible that he may be re-rated within the first year.

K-1764. That is possible, but is it normal ?—It is not normal, it is possible.

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\* *N. P.*—The following information on this point was supplied by the witness subsequently :—

It is regretted that *Mr. Cliff* was not correctly answered about the special rate of Rs. 2-10-0 per day. In many cases Rs. 2-10-0 is included in the special rate. The witness had in his mind at the time the maximum and special rate of Rs. 3-4-0 per day. The rate Rs. 2-10-0 per day is available for 20 per cent. of all men in most classes where ordinary maxima may be less.

K-1765. Can you tell me the percentage of unauthorised leave in these two shops ?—I am afraid I have not got the figures for loco shop, but as far as the carriage and wagon shop is concerned, the percentage is 10—8 per cent. is authorised leave and 2 per cent. unauthorised leave.

K-1766. Can you further tell us in respect of these two shops the number of days of sickness leave for each workman per annum ?—You want me to work that out ?

K-1767. Take, for instance, 1928 : can you give us a record of the number of days of sickness leave—the average number of sickness leave ?—I am afraid I cannot. The hospital keeps record of that. They are allowed 15 days leave per year on full pay.

*Mr. Cliff* : I do not know whether I may not digress for a moment. Sir Ernest Jackson, we have had the opportunity of going round these two shops and I would like if we might get the information in respect of sickness leave in these two shops and the amount of pay that is given during sickness. Would it be possible to get that information.

*Sir Ernest Jackson* : I very much doubt that. They could give figures in respect of those who were under treatment in hospital.

*Mr. Cliff* : I asked in the hospital yesterday ; and they could only give me information in respect of possibly 50 per cent. of the staff who actually used the hospital ; but I would like you to examine your records in respect of these two shops and see whether it is possible to tell us what is the actual sickness leave granted in these two shops.

*Sir Ernest Jackson* : I shall be pleased to look into it.

K-1767a. One other thing with regard to information in respect of these two shops. Can you give us a graph taking the years 1913 and 1914. and taking the period after the war up to the present time, and tell us what is the outturn and the estimated value of the outturn of these two shops. Could you also tell us what is the wages cost ?

*Sir Ernest Jackson* : I shall have it worked out for you.

K. 1768. *Mr. Cliff* : What I am asking is a graph with regard to these two shops, from the year 1913-14 (omitting the four years following for obvious reasons) up to the present time, showing the relation between the outturn and the estimated value of the outturn. I would also like to have the wages cost ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : Do I understand you to mean the price per unit for the repair of loco. and the repair of wagons ?

K-1769. I understand you gave this information to the Railway Board ?—We did not give it in the past, we do now.

*Mr. Cliff* : I should be obliged if as reliable a guide as possible could be provided.

K-1770. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Will the figure be the same as the cost of production that you are graphing out. How are you going to estimate the value of the work in the two cases ?—The cost of repairing wagons goes to one head of account and the cost of repairing loco goes to another head of account. We can work out the cost per repair unit in each case.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : That is the cost of production to you. That is not the value, because you do the work. You are going to take only the cost of production.

K-1771. *Mr. Cliff* : In your memorandum, you deal with the efficiency of workshop staff. Are your remarks applicable to either shop ?—They refer to the three shops, the shops here and the shops at Parel.

K-1772. I do not want to take you away from your shops. Is that paragraph applicable to your own shop here ?—No, it is not.

K-1773. Does that answer apply to the loco. shop ?—Yes, it does.

K-1774. In this memorandum reference is made to the “Loco department, broad and metre gauge—running staff.” Does that come under your supervision ?—Yes, so far as the metre gauge carriage and wagon department running staff is concerned.

K-1775. There is a statement : “The running staff are always allowed sufficient rest between each trip and if they need more, they can sign for rest.” I would like to have that explained if I might ?—That applies to drivers. They may have had a certain amount of rest. But if they feel that they would like to have a few hours more, as for instance after working during the hot weather, they have simply to sign for more rest.

K-1776. Am I to assume that a man is scheduled to have 8 hours rest, and then has the liberty and opportunity to take four or five hours more if he desires ?—He gets 12 hours at home stations and 6 hours at out stations. If he wants more he signs for it.

K-1777. He can then take more hours at his own cost if he desires ?—Yes, that is so.

K-1778. With regard to these tiffin sheds we saw yesterday in both the shops, how many people at a time can use them ?—The staff committee has asked me to enlarge the sheds. I have not the money at the present moment and I am not able to enlarge them.

K-1779. I suppose you are not surprised at the request ?—No.

K-1780. With regard to staff committees, am I right in assuming that they have been in operation only for six months ?—Yes, that is my own staff committee.

K-1781. You have during that time one threat of resignation. Is that so ?—Yes.

K-1782. Could you tell me the most prominent thing that has been brought up at the staff committee by the staff for consideration ?—Do you mean the hardest thing to grant ?

K-1783. I mean the most pressing grievance brought to your notice during these six months ?—They wanted more passes, but I could not deal with that matter.

K-1784. You may take a case which you are competent to deal with ?—They asked for the bicycle shed to be enlarged. The next time the Agent came round the shops I showed him the bicycle shed and he said if I would prepare plans and estimates he would sanction it.

K-1785. Is there a single concession that you have conceded during these six months ?—No.\*

K-1786. With regard to housing, I am not going to ask you about policy ; but I presume the headquarters at Bombay must have been supplied with the information from Ajmer. In this memorandum it is stated : “ At headquarters, *viz.*, Ajmer and Bombay, no accommodation is provided for the artisan class as there is ample to be obtained in the two cities. . . . ” Can it be said that “ the ample accommodation to be obtained in this city is accommodation of the kind that will lead to a prevention of the unsatisfactory conditions of life and health spelt out in your memorandum ” ?—I should say, not.

K-1787. Have you visited the village of Nagra ?—Not very often.

K-1788. Now may I ask the personnel officer a few questions ? We went round the shops yesterday morning and one of the workmen made a statement : he was indebted to a *banna* to the extent of Rs. 100. Subsequently he obtained a loan of Rs. 100 from the co-operative society. The loan was to be repaid in 24 monthly instalments of Rs. 5 each. Is that the rate at which the money is lent to the workers ?—(*Col. Hobbs*) : It depends on the number of instalments in which the man wants to repay his loan. Suppose the man borrows Rs. 100 and wants to pay back in 12 monthly instalments. The Rs. 100 is at once debited with an interest of Rs. 5 which makes it Rs. 105. This Rs. 105 is to be repaid in 12 equal monthly instalments.

K-1789. If a man does not borrow for more than 12 months he is not charged more than five per cent ?—No, but the interest is added initially.

K-1790. Take the particular case I quoted. Is that a common form of repayment ?—Yes, but I do not know how he arrived at Rs. 5 a month. If he borrowed Rs. 100 and wanted to pay back in 24 monthly instalments he would have to pay only Rs. 110|24 or Rs. 4 and odd and not Rs. 5.

K-1791. But the statement has been made by one of the men in the presence of one of his officers. Would you be good enough to look into the matter and let us know what the exact system is ?—Simply to facilitate book-keeping and make the man easily understand what amount would be deducted from his pay each month, we add the interest to the sum borrowed even in the beginning and divide the amount by the number of instalments he wants to pay.

K-1792. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : Under this system what would be the real rate of interest ?—It must be much more than 5 per cent.

K-1793. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : That would be 8½ to 9 per cent. ?—Yes.

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\*N. B.—This was subsequently amplified by the witness as follows :—

I took the question to be “ Can you recollect ”, etc. As I could not recollect I answered No. I also told the Chairman that I thought I had promised to submit a statement of percentage of refusals and approvals, etc. This has been done. Approvals were 44 per cent. *vide* statement (ii) sent under Carriage and Wagon Superintendent's No. 4207-G. of 26th November 1929.



K-1794. *Mr. Clifff* : With regard to the piece-work system in your carriage shops could you give us an explanation of how that is worked ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : I will take the smithy shop. We have the following methods of fixing the rates for piece-work in the smithy. When it is necessary to fix a price for any article, a smith on the maximum pay of Rs. 2 per day is taken with as many strikers as are necessary (striker's pay Re. 0-9-0 to Re. 1 per day) and he is given the job to do for any period up to a month under constant supervision. His outturn is then taken, inspected and passed and the pay for the time worked out. From this a rate per article is obtained. This statement is sent to the Works Manager, and if he thinks it all right, he approves of it. We have no elaborate price fixing machinery in the shops. If a man is working on a job with three strikers, the headman takes 25 per cent. of the profit and the rest is divided amongst the strikers in proportion to their pay.

K-1795. Do I understand that you give the smith a particular piece of work to do which will take a month ?—No, he would be making a lot of small fittings of the same type during that month.

K-1796. You have got a record of the time taken and the cost ?—Yes.

K-1797. When you are going to put them on piece-work, do you *plus* that rate by 25 per cent. ?—No.

K-1798. In that case where do you get the profit of 25 per cent. from ?—Ordinarily, according to a piece-work standard he might be expected to make, say, 8 articles a day. If he happened to turn out 10 articles, he would get a profit which is the 9th and 10th articles.

K-1799. If a man makes 8 articles, the time rate for each article, let us assume for a moment, is Re. 1. Suppose a man makes 10 articles, instead, of crediting him with Rs. 8, he is credited with Rs. 10, *i.e.*, Rs. 2 more than the Rs. 8. And he gets 25 per cent. of this Rs. 2 and the strikers take the remaining 75 per cent. among themselves. Is that the position ?—Yes.

K-1800. Now can these rates be challenged by the work-people in any way ?—They never do that. The system has been in existence for a long time ; it is very simple and the men can all thoroughly understand it.

K-1801. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Now take the particular case you mentioned of a smith with three strikers. The smith gets only one fourth of the profit and has no advantage over the strikers ?—No.

K-1802. Suppose there were four strikers. Would he then take only 20 per cent. ?—No, he always takes 25 per cent. irrespective of the number of strikers.

K-1803. If he was on the job with only one striker he gets only 25 per cent. and the striker gets the remaining 75 per cent. Would that be a correct position ?—Yes, on some occasions it so happens.

K-1804. *Col. Russell* : In the memorandum submitted by the Railway Board it is stated that " the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway reports that the standard of health of railway employees is not high due to lack of adequate nourishment ". But you have modified that statement in your memorandum where you deal with general conditions

of health of your employees. Do you agree that that statement is correct ?—(*Mr. Condon*) : No, I do not subscribe to that.

K-1805. Then who was it that inserted that in the memorandum ?—I do not know. Perhaps that was inserted by the Medical Officer at Bombay.

K-1806. Do you personally think that that is correct so far as your men are concerned ?—I personally do not subscribe to that statement.

K-1807. Do you agree that that is due to “ over-crowding in dwellings ”, for that is also given as one of the causes of the low state of health ?—Not so far as my staff is concerned.

K-1808. Dealing with efficiency your memorandum says that the high incidence of sickness has reduced the efficiency of the worker. And there is definite evidence before us that even among your male workers there is a high degree of tuberculosis which is invariably associated with over-crowding. How then could you say that there is no over-crowding ?—The statement might probably refer to the shops. My staff is scattered over the whole line.

K-1809. The Medical Officer’s memorandum says that there is a high incidence of tuberculosis in Ajmer, even among the male workers. This disease is always associated with overcrowding.—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : I never know where my men live. Some live in the city and some in the villages. The majority of them live in the villages round the carriage shops.

K-1810. But I understand that a considerable number of them live in the city ?—Yes, that is so.

K-1811. You have already admitted that the conditions in certain villages are unsatisfactory ?—Yes, I have.

K-1812. Would it not help to increase the efficiency of your workers if you provided good railway colonies for housing them ?—That is a question of very general policy and I do not think I can answer that.

K-1813. You would not care to express an opinion ?—I could express an opinion for Ajmer and should say that my men would not care to go and live in these places. Here in the city they have their amusements and cinemas and other amenities.

K-1814. Suppose you provide those amusements and carry on general welfare work in those colonies, will your workmen go and live in those houses ?—I could not say. I would not like to express an opinion.

K-1815. What welfare work do you do at Ajmer ?—I am the chairman of the local welfare committee. The treasurer is an audit officer. On the committee there are Railway Medical Officer, a Chaplain of the Church of England, a Roman Catholic Chaplain, and three Indians employed on the railway. The secretary is the wife of a railway officer. The activities of the committee are entirely confined to helping women and children. We have two health visitors, one an Indian and another a European. There are four infant welfare centres. On the books at present there are 25 Anglo-Indian and 75 Indian babies receiving treatment.

K-1816. Does the railway administration pay for these centres?—Yes, it does indirectly.

K-1817. Have you any trained mid-wives?—Yes, we have one.

K-1818. Do the workers take advantage of the services of the trained midwife and generally of the medical facilities provided by the welfare centres?—Yes, they do take advantage of them.

K-1819. But you have only 75 babies. Does that not seem to be a small number compared with the size of the staff?—We have just made a start with this. The movement is in its infancy. Probably later on we might get more people to take advantage of the facilities given here.

K-1820. How long has this scheme been working?—About a year or 18 months (actually started in January 1927).

K-1821. Have your local sanitary committees proved a success?—(Mr. Condon) : Yes, I think they have.

K-1822. You have mentioned in your memorandum that they manage bakeries, vegetable shops, milk-supply and slaughter houses. How do they manage these matters when most of these are run by private individuals?—That does not refer to Ajmer but to small stations in the districts.

K-1823. How does the sanitary committee manage places of that kind when obviously they cannot own them?—We own them. We have got vegetable shops and butcher shops. The sanitary committee inspect the quarters and drains regularly and report at monthly meetings what should be done.

K-1824. In your memorandum dealing with health you say that “for 75,000 employees there are 48,000 sick certificates issued annually resulting in 406,368 days of labour being lost”. I find that this works out to 4.5 days of sickness per employee in a year and 8.5 days of sickness per certificate. Do you think that these figures give a fair idea of the amount of sickness of your employees?—I understand that the Medical department is responsible for these figures.

K-1825. Compared with English rates, these figures do not seem to be excessive for India. Are you sure of their accuracy?—I am afraid I know nothing about them.

K-1826. Wherefrom can we get this information?—From the Chief Medical Officer, Bombay.

K-1827. In your memorandum you deal with health and refer to the incidence of malaria. My experience has been that even in municipal areas through which the railway lines run, there are large numbers of pools lying along each side of the line, breeding mosquitoes and producing conditions suitable for malaria. You say that any measures to attack this problem thoroughly “would be possibly of a very little advantage unless all contiguous Municipalities and States acted *pari passu*”. I have always observed that such an attitude does not help. The Municipality waits for the railways to take steps first and the railways in turn wait for the Municipality to take steps first. In the result you get no further. Could you suggest any method by

which that difficulty can be got over ?—I could tell you of one case in my experience in the Punjab. It so happened that both the railway and the Municipality were reluctant to take the initiative in the matter, unless the authority would guarantee similar action I suggested that the railway should in any case do their part and thereby induce the other authority to do their part. Also we would then be in a stronger position to induce Government or some other authority to compel the Municipality to do their part.

K-1828. Where did this happen ?—In the Sirsa Division. And that is the policy that we are trying at the present moment.

K-1829. The workmen who suffer accidents are treated in hospitals. Would a workman so treated be allowed to go home if the Medical Officer thought it a serious enough case to be detained in the hospital ?—I am afraid that is a question for a Medical Officer to answer.

K-1830. *Mr. Govind Prasad* : The Railway Board is reported to have said at Delhi that racial discrimination existed neither in theory nor in practice on Indian railways, whether State or Company managed. Can you say if that is true in respect of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, especially the metre gauge section and carriage and wagon and loco workshops ?—Yes, we have fairly well eliminated all racial discrimination. In my opinion the racial discrimination is rather against the Europeans and Anglo-Indians. It appears that the Indian aspect of the case only is examined.

K-1831. My question is, does racial discrimination exist ?—It does not exist.

K-1832. In your Memorandum you have given the minimum and maximum rates of pay of the various classes of workmen. I will take three instances : (1) Inspector, Assistant Yard, European and Indian ; (2) Supervisor, European and Indian ; (3) Mechanic, European and Anglo-Indian. In the first two instances there are both Europeans and Indians ; but in the third nothing is said about an Indian mechanic ; you only say European and Anglo-Indian. Do you think there can be no Indian mechanic ?—There are Indians in that category now.

K-1833. What I mean is, whether, when you prepared this memorandum there were any Indian mechanics ?—I cannot say whether there were any then.

K-1834. Had there been any they would have been mentioned there ?—This matter which you have brought up was placed before me by my staff-committee ; they complained that this was racial discrimination, and I decided that we would take out the words Europeans and Anglo-Indian throughout the list.

K-1835. When did you take that out ?—About a month ago.

K-1836. May I ask whether there is any Indian mechanic working now ?—Yes.

K-1837. When was he appointed—only two days before the Commission arrived ?—As a matter of fact I did put one in about then ; but it was not on account of what you suggest, but because the lad had just come out of his time and I put him in.

K-1838. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Had he come back from training at Home ?—No, he was one of our own men.

K-1839. *Mr. Govind Prasad* : Is there any fixed test for the selection of mechanics ?—This grade is usually for apprentices who have come out of their time and completed a test for mechanics and fitters, etc.

K-1840. Is there no fixed test ?—No, there is no fixed test. A mechanic is a general sort of man ; you can put him on one job and then depute him to another job. He is a jack of all trades.

K-1841. Can you tell us whether within the last 20 years since when these shops have been working, there has been any Indian mechanic, drawing any salary like this, or even within the last five years ?—Not on the daily rated pay, I imagine.

K-1842. My next question will refer to locomotive shops, but it is on the same subject. You have mentioned various grades : for instance, Fitter or Erector, A, B and C grade ; Turner, A, B and C grade ; Boilermaker A and B grade. Can you tell us how many Indians are in each of these grades ?—I have not got these figures.

K-1843. Can you supply us with those figures ?—Yes.

K-1844. Is it a fact that these distinctions in disguise were introduced in 1927 ? These grades were made A, B, C, D and E only in that year ; previous to that the only question was between a European or Anglo-Indian and an Indian. Is that so ?—They have washed out the discrimination altogether and they have made the grades A and B, and so on, and anybody is eligible for these grades.

K-1845. *The Chairman* : These are grades dependent upon ability ?—Yes, purely on ability.

K-1846. *Mr. Govind Prasad* : As to drivers, how many Indians are there in each grade ? Can you supply us with that information ?—We can get the figures ; we have not got them available here.

K-1847. Is it not a fact that (in the carriage and wagon shops) firewood coal and packing cases are sold only to Europeans and Anglo-Indians and not to Indians ?—We have a very limited supply and we have to draw a line below a certain grade—below the chargemen.

K-1848. There were only Europeans and Anglo-Indians and no Indians as chargemen ?—There are Indian chargemen.

K-1849. How many ?—About three.

K-1850. How many chargemen are there in all ?—About 18.

K-1851. *The Chairman* : These concessions are given by grades ?—Yes, there is a limited supply of firewood available for sale.

K-1852. Is it a fact that this question was raised by the carriage and wagon shop staff committee and no heed was paid to it ?—It was raised by the staff committee, and then I wrote round to the various shops to ascertain whether it would be possible to supply firewood to all the staff ; it was calculated that if this were done, about 600 maunds

of firewood would be required. So I told the committee that I was very sorry I could not meet their wishes in the matter.

K-1853. You could not even supply a small quantity ?—I could not ; I had to meet the previous demand.

K-1854. So the demand for this by the Europeans and Anglo-Indians is very great ?—200 maunds is all that I can supply.

K-1855. Do I understand you correctly that the demand for these things by the Europeans and Anglo-Indians is very great and you cannot meet it ?—I can only meet the demand up to 200 maunds. The demand is monthly.

K-1856. And that is consumed by the Anglo-Indians and Europeans down to the grade of chargemen ?—Anybody down to that grade is eligible for the concession.

K-1857. Is it a fact that during the Christmas holidays which are the longest during the year, passes are not issued to non-Christians, whereas all European, Anglo-Indian and Indian Christian officers are allowed passes from the middle of December to the middle of January. No passes are issued, except under very special circumstances, to Indians ?—Except for Christians we do not issue any passes during that period.

K-1858. What is the reason ?—It is for the sake of the travelling public.

K-1859. I cannot understand you ?—We do not wish to inconvenience the travelling public by overcrowding the trains with railwaymen travelling on passes.

K-1860. But you issue P. T. O.'s (Privilege Ticket Orders). A man travelling by a P. T. O. is just as much an inconvenience to the passenger as a man travelling with a pass. When you issue P. T. O.'s what is the object ?

*The Chairman* : If you issue more passes it makes more travellers ?

*Mr. Cliff* : I understand the question is, Mr. Chairman, they cannot obtain privilege ticket orders and they may have to travel.

K-1862. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Can they obtain privilege ticket orders ?—Yes. The issue of P. T. O.'s during Christmas has recently been authorised.

K-1863. *Mr. Govind Prasad* : Is it a fact that Indians are not allowed admission in the Railway Institute at Ajmer ?—Yes.

K-1864. What is the reason ?—They have got their own institute—the Bisset Institute.

K-1865. Can you tell us how much is given from your fine fund to the Railway Institute at Christmas time and how much is given to the Bisset Institute ?—At Christmas all the institutes get money for Christmas-trees and that sort of thing. The Bisset Institute at Ajmer got Rs. 350 from the fine fund at Diwali.

K-1866. That is another matter. What is the annual expenditure ?—All the institutes are self-supporting. No contribution is made from the fine fund for the ordinary expenses of a institute ; it is only for occasional grants.

K-1867. The railway recreation grounds are generally used by the Anglo-Indians and there are very few Indians in the teams that are selected ?—The majority of my cricket team are Indians.

K-1868. Do you provide any other recreation for these over 6,000 workmen ?—In my sports club I have hockey, football and cricket and any Anglo-Indian or Indian is equally welcome to join it.

K-1869. Can you tell me how many of the workers have joined this club ?—I think the figure is about 150.

K-1870. *Sir Alexander Murray* : In the cricket, hockey and football teams the majority are Indians ?—The Indians that I have got in my club mostly take to cricket ; some take to football, some take to hockey, but the majority of them play cricket.

K-1871. In your memorandum you have given the total expenditure during the year on railway schools. On calculating the percentage under the various heads I find that 12.7 per cent. is spent on Indian students, whereas as much as 55.8 per cent. is spent on Anglo-Indians and Europeans ?—That is a general question of policy which I am sorry I cannot reply to.

*The Chairman* : We dealt very fully with this question at Delhi when we had the Railway Board before us.

K-1872. *Mr. Govind Prasad* : Is there any restriction in the matter of appointment of Indians as Foremen and Assistant Foremen ?—No, provided they have the necessary qualifications.

K-1872a. Can you give us a list showing how many Foremen and Assistant Foremen are Indians, Europeans and Anglo-Indians ?—I can certainly give such a list.

K-1873. Is it a fact that out of 4,500 Indian employees there is only one Indian who gets more than Rs. 5 a day and only 20 who get more than Rs. 2-10-0 a day, while of the 350 European and Anglo-Indian employees more than 20 get over Rs. 5 a day and about 60 get more than Rs. 2-10-0 a day ?—I cannot check those figures without referring to my establishment list.

K-1874. Can you say at least whether there is not one Indian only who gets more than Rs. 5 a day ?—I have got an Indian who gets Rs. 295 per month.

K-1875. I am not referring to the monthly paid establishment but to the daily rated men ?—I have Indians as supervisors and mechanics on Rs. 4-8-0 a day.

K-1876. In your memorandum it is mentioned that the total grants made to the Europeans and Anglo-Indians during the year from Revenue in connection with education was Rs. 9,392, while no grant was made to the Indians. Can you tell us what is the reason for this ?—This is another general question which I am afraid I cannot answer.

*The Chairman* : We went into this matter also at Delhi. I might say that the Commission decided at Lahore to take specially the question of racial discrimination at Delhi, and we made a special point of that question at Delhi where the Railway Board which governs the general principles could answer.

*Mr. Govind Prasad* : The Member-in-charge of Railways had made a statement that racial discrimination did not exist on the railways managed either by companies or by the State. I merely wanted to draw your attention to show that that was not an accurate statement. I would not press it further.

K-1877. While inspecting the workshops yesterday a labourer told us that 20 years ago he was engaged on 8 as. a day and now he is getting Rs. 1-4-0 a day. Can you tell us whether it is for the benefit of the company or of the man himself that he should work 20 years at one and the same place, getting 8 as. at the beginning and Rs. 1-4-0 now ?—We cannot generalize taking individual cases like that. He might not have had any ambition to learn.

K-1878. If one shows improvement and learns new things do you see that he is put on a work which gives him more remuneration ?—Certainly, when opportunity comes.

K-1879. Is it a fact that many of the workers have not been given their due promotion for the last three years ?—I do not think that is correct, as a general statement.

K-1880. I never said all, but 'many' ?—I should not say it is correct.

K-1881. There have been cases ?—Of course, there have been cases, but I should say there have been extraordinarily few.

K-1882. I am told that in the year 1928 in one of the loco departments an increment of Rs. 80 was given to one of the *mistris* ; is it correct ?—(*Mr. Cotesworth*) : I cannot verify that statement.

*The Chairman* : That seems to be an individual case. We are not here to deal with individual cases but only with principles.

K-1883. *Mr. Gregory* : Concerning the manufacture of locomotives *Mr. Cotesworth* made a statement to the effect that he could meet any programme of construction without additional machinery. Does he mean that he has no limiting capacity to his shops ?—(*Mr. Cotesworth*) : My answer was based on the normal programme.

K-1884. In that case what is the actual capacity ?—On an average 15 engines a year, and 20 outside.

K-1885. So that if you get a programme for the supply of 25 to 30 engines you would not be able to meet the demand ?—No.

K-1886. You would have to get them from outside ?—Yes.

K-1887. The Commission whilst visiting the hospital was shown two wards which it was stated were kept specially for Indian women. A witness in answer to a question yesterday said that there was no provision made for women. Is it not a fact that those two wards are retained for Indian women ? (*Mr. Armistead*) : Yes,



K-1888. What is the procedure that you adopt when you carry out retrenchments in Ajmer both in the carriage and loco. shops?—I have not undertaken any retrenchment. I am not now filling up vacancies when they occur, except coolies.

K-1889. Did you discharge a big number at any time?—No.

K-1890. In the memoranda submitted to the Commission by Miss Copeland and Mr. Gibson there are statements which imply that the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway in reducing their staff created a bad situation of unemployment. What is your opinion in regard to that?—It is entirely incorrect.

K-1891. With regard to wages, in various statements given in your memorandum, you have supplied information regarding the existing cadre and the improved cadre; and also the existing cadre and the proposed cadre. What do you really mean by the "proposed cadre"?—(*Mr. Condon*): Those statements were prepared several months ago when we sent them in for getting sanction to the increased cadre; that is to say, the existing cadre was the one existing then. Now the existing cadre is the one shown under the heading "proposed cadre".

K-1892. That statement therefore requires correction?—Yes. The heading "Existing cadre" should be changed into "Previous or old cadre" and the heading "Proposed cadre" should be read as "Existing cadre".

K-1893. *Mr. Cliff*: What is the date of its operation?—It came into force from the 1st of January of this year.

K-1894. *Mr. Gregory*: Am I to understand that your "existing cadre" is the old scale and your "proposed cadre" should be the "existing scale"?—Yes.

K-1895. In your memorandum you say "Disciplinary powers rest entirely with the District Loco. Superintendents acting on recommendations from Loco. Foremen, except in the case of European and Anglo-Indian staff, whose punishments, etc., require the Locomotive Superintendent's approval". Is that the case now?—(*Mr. Cotesworth*): No.

K-1896. This means that the memorandum really requires correction as far as that statement is concerned?—Yes, I have already corrected that.

K-1897. *The Chairman*: Have you sent a note of the corrections to be made?—No.

K-1898. Will you please see that that is done?—Yes.

K-1899. *Colonel Gidney*: With regard to the standardization of wages you state in your memorandum that you base it on living wage or the cost of living. Do you do that in respect of all wages?—(*Mr. Condon*). Are you referring to the engineering department?

K-1900. Engineering as well as other departments. I want to know what you would give as the minimum living wage of an Anglo-Indian boy, say, in your apprentice school, for board and lodging, where there is a mass purchase and supply of food?—I cannot tell you,

K-1901. Can you tell me what is the rate allowed per apprentice in your schools ? Is it not Rs. 30 ?—No, not the standard rate.

K-1902. I believe it is Rs. 30 ?—I have 133 Anglo-Indians on daily rates of pay in the shops and the average rate is Rs. 3-9-0 a day.

K-1903. I am not talking of their average wages ; I am referring to their cost of living. Would I be right in saying that Rs. 30 is the official amount which is deducted from apprentices in your apprentice school for board and lodging ?—(*Mr. Cotesworth*) : For board only.

K-1904. That does not include clothing or anything else ?—No.

K-1905. In your workshops are wages paid for the quality of work performed and the supervision of that work, or do you pay on a communal basis ?—You were asked questions just now, as to the difference in the rates of pay of different workmen and one of the Commissioners made a marked comparison between the wages given to an Anglo-Indian and an Indian. I do not want to stress any comparison, but, I desire to know on what principle such differences exist : In short do you pay your wages on the quality of work performed and on the supervision of that work or on the community ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : On the value of the work.

K-1906. I take it that Ajmer is the headquarters of the metre gauge section of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway ?—Yes.

K-1907. And therefore you have practically the powers of an Agent here ?—No.

K-1908. You have powers of dismissal and appointment ?—Up to a certain limit.

K-1909. You can dismiss any servant under you ?—No.

K-1910. You can dismiss any subordinate under you ?—No.

K-1911. You cannot dismiss any one ?—I can ; I have a limit.

K-1912. What is the limit ?—Anything over Rs. 250 should go to the Agent.

K-1913. Your punishments to the lower paid Indians and Anglo-Indians depend as the case may be on the recommendation of the Loco. Foreman or the Traffic Inspector, do they not ?—In the case of the carriage and wagon shops it depends on the Foremen.

K-1913a. And in the traffic department on the Traffic Inspector. In the engineering department he can appoint and discharge whom he likes ? Is that so ?—(*Mr. Condon*) : There are certain limits.

K-1914. Dealing with the relationship between the official staff and employees, in your memorandum, you say : “ if an employee considers that insufficient attention has been paid to an appeal he has access to the Agent through the channels indicated above ”. What are those channels ?

*The Chairman* : It is stated in the memorandum : “ an employee may approach his District Officer or Works Manager through his Inspector or Foreman as the case may be ”.

K-1915. *Colonel Gidney* : I am not talking of the District Officer now ; I am talking of the Loco. Superintendent and his Foreman

because the appeal comes to him through the Foreman. If a man over Rs. 250 is dismissed by you and he wishes to appeal to the Agent, what is the channel ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : A man over Rs. 250 cannot be dismissed by the Loco. Superintendent but only by the Agent.

K-1916. Well suppose a man under Rs. 250 is dismissed by you and he wishes to appeal to the Agent against his dismissal what is the channel ?—He sends his appeal through the head of the department to the Agent.

K-1917. How many times has the Agent of your railway disagreed with the orders of the head of a department, say yours ?—He has never done so in my case.

K-1918. In your memorandum you say : “ The rent charged on the Broad Gauge is based on 6 per cent. on the capital cost and on the Meter Gauge the charge is Rs. 8 per 250 square feet ”. I have compared this with the North-Western Railway rent charges. There the subordinates are charged Rs. 1-8-0 per 100 square feet for inside rooms and Re. 1 for outside rooms, while in the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway you charge Rs. 4 per 125 square feet. Do you not think your rates are exorbitant ?—(*Mr. Condon*) : These rates are fixed by the higher authorities and not by the department.

K-1919. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : Based on the cost of the building ?—Perhaps.

K-1920. *Colonel Gidney* : A great deal has been said about the difference in educational grants made to Anglo-Indians and Indian employees. Will you kindly enlighten us on these points : Is it a fact that it costs your Anglo-Indian subordinate in Ajmer more money to educate his children in Ajmer than an Indian ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : Possibly.

*Colonel Gidney* : An Anglo-Indian infant is charged in your railway school Rs. 2 per mensem for fee while an Indian infant is charged 4 annas ; you only teach up to the second or the third standard in the case of Anglo-Indians, but you provide a high school for Indians in Ajmer and Bandikui ; in this way you compel your Anglo-Indian and European employees to send their children to hill schools where they have to spend as much as from Rs. 65 to Rs. 80 per child per month and for which your Railway makes a grant of from Rs. 12 to Rs. 18 per child per mensem. In spite of this undeniable fact it is said that the Anglo-Indian employee is favoured at the expense of the Indian. I want to bring this point out clearly.

*The Chairman* : We went all over that ground at Delhi.

*Mr. Joshi* : Are Anglo-Indians prevented from joining the high school meant for Indians ?

*Colonel Gidney* : In many cases our religion prevents this but I shall leave it at that.

K-1921. What is your opinion of the Anglo-Indian workman under you ; is he a good workman ?—Anglo-Indians in my shop are a good lot.

K-1922. I know they are very happy in their work under you and Mr. Fraser, and I am glad that you consider them to be very good workmen. You have often felt that they are capable of occupying the highest appointments in your workshops ; and frequently they have officiated in such appointments ?—I should not say “ Frequently ”.

K-1923. Some have been permanently appointed as Foremen ?—Yes.

K-1924. They have given you satisfaction ?—Yes.

K-1925. They are recruited from a good class of fellows and you have found them a loyal lot of good intelligent workmen ?—Yes.

K-1926. Do I understand the same is true in respect of men working in the loco. workshop under you, Mr. Cotesworth ?—(Mr. Cotesworth) : Yes.

K-1927. With that appreciation for which I am very grateful indeed, I would refer you to the memorandum submitted to the Commission by the Ajmer Provincial Branch of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association. You just now said, Mr. Armitstead, that there is no racial discrimination ?—(Mr. Armitstead) : Yes.

K-1928. Will you please reconcile your reply with the figures that are given in that memorandum : you will see therefrom that there is not one single Indian as Foreman and there are only five Anglo-Indians—and these are in the lower grades of Foremen and yet these workshops have been going for the last 40 years ?—That is quite true. Indians are working their way up gradually ; it will take time.

K-1929. Do you imply by that that covenanting is still going on ?—I think if you want to keep your workshops up-to-date, you must from time to time get covenanted men specially trained from Home.

K-1930. Is not one of their duties to train men of this country ?—Yes.

K-1931. And it is one of the chief duties of the works manager and his assistant to do the same training ?—Yes.

*Col. Gidney* : Then is it not a sad commentary on your system of training that you have not got one Indian fit to be a foreman of any grade and not a single Anglo-Indian fit to be a senior grade foreman in the carriage and wagon workshops, though the workshops have been in existence for the last 40 years ; or is it that your covenanted foreman cannot train or is it that the Anglo-Indians and Indians cannot understand and be trained ? What is it ?

*The Chairman* : You will remember that in Delhi it was clearly admitted that there had been in the past racial discrimination but that there was none now and that it would take sometime to bring Indians up to occupy the higher places.

*Colonel Gidney* : I do not want to press this to a point of nauseous repetition. What I want to ask the witness is this : having given his admission and appreciation of the intelligence and ability of Anglo-Indians why is it that Anglo-Indians are considered fit to officiate as Foremen but are not fit to be made permanent, except in the case of very few men. To my mind it is nothing but communal distinction.

K-1932. Am I right, Mr. Armitstead, if I say that there are more covenanted men engaged to-day in the metre gauge of the Bombay,

Baroda and Central India Railway than in the whole of the railways in India put together?—I should not say that. I have only four men and the loco. have ten, I believe.

K-1933. Do you now admit that there is communal distinction. I do not mean racial distinction?—No.

K-1934. Then why is it you have not appointed more Anglo-Indians and Indians as Foremen?—I have got 7 senior Foremen of whom 4 are covenanted men, one was taken from foreign line, one is an Anglo-Indian and one is a domiciled European.

K-1935. When I say covenanted men I do not only mean men that you covenant direct from England, but, men who come to this country with the understood object of securing employment in the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway workshops and thus depriving capable men you have trained and who are awaiting promotion as their reward for efficient and loyal service? I know of some who have secured employment in this manner and which your railway has encouraged?—I have appointed one or two men to whom you specially refer.

K-1936. That is what I want you to do more liberally. From the Association's Memorandum I find there is a great difference in the treatment regarding allowances between traffic and loco.; indeed so great is this difference that one can hardly believe it. The loco. men and Drivers have seven allowances of sorts while the traffic has only one and he gets no extra pay for Sundays or other holidays. Is this a fact?—I am afraid I cannot answer that.

K-1937. Can you answer it, Mr. Cotesworth?—(Mr. Cotesworth) : I cannot. There is no traffic representative here.

K-1938. My last question refers to further communal distinction not racial discrimination—I am avoiding that phrase very carefully. If you look at the Association's memorandum you will find that all the stations, where you have amenities, such as churches, schools, institutes, shops and other such things that go to make life more pleasant in this railway, are given to Europeans and covenanted loco. Foremen, i.e., every Foreman appointed to these places is a European and that all the smaller stations where no such amenities exist are given to Anglo-Indians and others. The figures supplied give details. Is not that so?—You mean are they given to the senior men?

K-1939. No. I mean all such stations are given to Europeans?—Not always.

K-1940. Will you give the Commission a statement supporting what you say?—I will give you one.

K-1941. My next question is in regard to the 1923 revised rates of pay. Will you be good enough to tell the Commission whether it is a fact that there is either no reduction of old wages or an improvement in the loco. department and a marked reduction in the traffic department, I mean taken as a whole?—I am not in a position to answer a traffic question.

K-1942. Apart from a service sheet, do you keep a confidential report of every railway servant?—No.

K-1943. Do you make recommendations for the promotion of subordinates to the superior list ?—Yes.

K-1944. Have you recommended any one subordinate during your long years of office ?—Yes, we have one now ; he is now the District Carriage and Wagon Superintendent.

K-1945. Is he a man of this country ?—He has lived the whole of his life in this country, but he is a man who is going to retire at Home.

K-1946. So he is a European. During your term of service as Superintendent Carriage and Wagon Department you have promoted only one subordinate to the superior grade ? You, no doubt, realise that the Central Railway Advisory Committee has ruled that 20 per cent. of the official grade should be promoted from the subordinate staff ?—That rule has only come in recently.

K-1947. In 1925-26 it came in. I believe the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway has subscribed to the Government of India policy of Indianization, and so you must obtain 20 per cent. of your officials from subordinates which you have failed to do. Why ?—I think that is a general question of policy which I cannot answer.

K-1948. *Mr. Joshi* : In your memorandum you have given the number of apprentices in the A grade as 52. Could you tell us how many of these are Europeans, Anglo-Indians or Indians ?—We could not tell you without referring to our records.

K-1949. Can you give us a general idea ?—I would prefer to put up a statement.

K-1950. Are your staff committees elected bodies ?—Yes ; my workshops staff committees are elected by the men in each shop ; they hold a meeting and elect their own members of the committee.

K-1951. Have you on that committee any representative of the Union which exists here ?—No ; they have never applied for a place on the committee.

K-1952. What is the attitude of the men in the workshops towards these committees ?—That is a very difficult question to answer.

K-1953. You have no idea as to whether the men are favourable towards these committees ?—As a matter of fact they were not very keen when first started. I had to bring a little pressure to bear on them before I could get them started.

K-1954. Did you enquire why they are not keen ?—No, I have never taken any general opinion.

K-1955. You did not think it proper to make an enquiry as to why the men are not keen ?—I did not wish to make enquiries. I did not think it was improper.

K-1956. You refer to local committees—sanitary and other committees. Are the members of these committees elected or nominated ?—(*Mr. Condon*) : Nominated. The members are official representatives of certain posts—e.g., a Traffic Inspector or Station Master.

K-1957. Is there any objection to these being elected instead of being nominated ?—(Mr. Armitstead) : That is a general question of policy which I could not answer.

K-1958. I see that the number of institutes for Europeans and Anglo-Indians is 17, and as the total number of institutes is 29, the number of those for Indians is obviously 12. Why is this difference, when the number of Indian employees is very large ?—That is also a question of policy.

K-1959. Then in regard to provision for old age and death, I find that employees getting less than Rs. 30 a month are not allowed to be members of the provident fund ?—That is not a departmental matter ; it is a question of policy ; it is the Government rule.\*

K-1960. That is, only those employees who get more than Rs. 30 per month, get the benefit of the provident fund. Is that the Government rule ?—Yes.

K-1961. Are you able to say whether you will get a better class of men for your workshops if there is some provision for their old age ?—They have got the provision now—the gratuity and the provident fund.

K-1962. You stated that those people who get less than Rs. 30 a month cannot subscribe ?—They get gratuity on retirement or death.

K-1963. Do you not think you will get a better class of men for these positions if the men are given the benefit of the provident fund ?—Quite possibly.

K-1964. In regard to the provision of a rest day, you state that “ the work of this staff is essentially intermittent and as such they are not eligible for the weekly rest day ”. What is the connection between work being intermittent and the provision of a rest day. If they have to work for 12 or 15 or 16 hours a day, I fail to understand why they should be regarded as not being eligible for a rest day, because their work is intermittent. I cannot see any connection between work being intermittent and ineligibility for a rest day ?—I will read out to you the definition of the word ‘ intermittent ’. It is : “ For the purpose of these rules, work which is ‘ essentially intermittent ’ is that which does not entail continuous effective work throughout the hours of duty, but involves long periods of inaction, during which the worker is present, but is not called upon to display either physical activity or sustained attention ”.

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\*N.B.—The witness subsequently supplied the following information in amplification of his reply to this question :—

Mr. Joshi in referring to the memorandum submitted by this Railway was apparently under the impression that employees on a monthly wage of less than Rs. 30 per mensem were not allowed to subscribe to the Provident Fund. It should be explained that this Railway's memorandum merely gives the difference between the State Railway and this Company's rules, as regards the Provident Fund. Employees on this Railway, excepting those of the menials grades on Rs. 15 per mensem and over have the option of becoming members of the Provident Fund but to those (including menials) drawing a salary of Rs. 30 per mensem and over membership of the Fund is compulsory.

K-1965. Supposing a Station Master works for 12 hours, is his work intermittent or continuous ?—At a small station ?

K-1966. Yes. Is there any reason why after working for 12 hours a day for six days he does not require a rest day ?—He does not work for 12 hours a day. The 12 hours is the spreadover.

K-1967. But he may be working for 10 hours ?—On the other hand he may be working for only 2 or 4 hours.

K-1968. He may be working for 10 hours also at some stations ?—If his work comes to 10 hours a day he would be put on the fixed duty staff, and then he would get a rest day. There are stations and stations.

K-1969. There are stations where a Station Master is on duty for 24 hours—24 hours and only one Station Master ?—I do not think so.

K-1970. Then you say : “ At all the larger stations where the work is more or less of a continuous nature an 8-hour day or 56 hours’ week has been in force for some considerable time.” How do you make it 56 hours ? Eight hours a day for six days works out to 48 hours. You mean without a rest period ?—That also is without a rest period, yes.

K-1971. So it is continuous work ?—Yes.

K-1972. And still there is no rest day ?—Will you please read further on, where it says : “ The question of a weekly rest day is at present under consideration and it is anticipated that the change will be simple to effect by a change in the hours of duty.”

K-1973. You say that the change will be simple. Will it increase the number of hours ?—No.

K-1974. So the number of hours will remain 8 per day or 56 hours a week ?—Yes.

K-1975. So what is the change made then ? The change does not appear to be so simple because the hours are increased ?—The hours are the same.

K-1976. *The Chairman* : It is a question of re-arranging the hours so as to give a complete rest day ?—Yes.

K-1977. *Mr. Joshi* : So the rest day will be provided by increasing the daily hours ?—Yes.

K-1978. Dealing with the question of loans and co-operative credit societies you say : “ These loans are paid to the Staff Officer by the Society who disburses the amount due to the money-lender himself.” Who becomes actually responsible for this loan to the Society, the Staff Officer or the man himself ?—(*Col. Hobbs*) : Certainly the man himself, not the Staff Officer.

K-1979. *The Chairman* : But we were told, that when the Staff Officer handles the amount he is able to secure a reduction of a large percentage on what the *bania* claims is due to him. That is the object of passing the money through the Staff Officer ?—Yes ; but it goes a little further than that. Where I definitely handle the money it is for the reason that the money has been borrowed under a special concession which is not granted to the remainder of the staff, this concession being that the money is given for the specific purpose of settling debts with



the money-lender ; and it is my business to see that this particular money goes into the hands of the money-lender for the purpose of liquidating the debts. The money would not be given to a man to build a house, or for a marriage ceremony, or for a festival : it is given for the one specific purpose of clearing his debts with the money-lender, and it is for that reason that I hold it because I am responsible that the money is dealt with in that way alone. That is done only in those cases where the money is borrowed to liquidate the debts with the money-lender.

K-1980. *Mr. Joshi* : This is the only case in which the money is paid to you and not directly to the *bania* ?—Yes.

K-1981. Can you give us an idea of the amount of work done by you in liquidating old debts ?—Liquidation of debts by my department commenced with the granting of special concessions to gangmen.

K-1982. *The Chairman* : Are we not having a written statement in this matter ?—Yes.

K-1983. *Mr. Joshi* : With regard to holidays you say that the metre gauge shops get 22 days, whereas broad gauge shops get only 15 days. What is this difference due to ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : They are all gazetted holidays.

K-1984. Are they settled by Government ?—Yes.

K-1985. The local Government in whose jurisdiction the broad gauge line passes give only 15 holidays. Is that so ?

*The Chairman* : You may put it the other way : the metre gauge authorities give more than the broad gauge authorities.

K-1986. *Mr. Joshi* : With regard to this concession of fire-wood supply, why is this given only to highly paid Europeans and Anglo-Indians and not to low-paid men ?—We have adopted the simple method of starting at the top.

K-1987. Would it not have been better if you had begun from the bottom ?—There would not be enough to go round to all persons.

K-1988. Could a beginning not have been made with the people at the bottom who are in need of such concessions ?—I have said that sufficient quantity was not available. They would all get only a few sticks each. I have promised to do my best to meet their requirements next time.

K-1989. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is not the wood paid for ?—Yes, it is.

K-1990. *Mr. Joshi* : My question is if the other people also want to buy that, why not allow them to do so ? However I shall leave this for the present.

K-1991. Regarding passes, you stated that these are not given to Indians during Christmas and that they are confined to Europeans and Anglo-Indians only. Is there any long period like Christmas during which Indians alone will get passes while the rest will not ?—No. But it is not a question of Europeans and Anglo-Indians, but Christians.

K-1992. So that while there is no period when these people cannot get passes, there is a period of Christmas during which Indians cannot get passes ?—Yes.

K-1993. Regarding wages, you said that men were paid only for work done and not for racial or communal considerations. If you paid more to an European or an Anglo-Indian it was because he did more work than anybody else who got less. Is there any way in which you can satisfy a non-European that your criterion is work and not racial considerations ?

*Sir Alexander Murray* : There must be a change of heart as some body puts it.

*Mr. Joshi* : I have always felt that it is not for work, but for racial considerations. Is there any method by which you can convince me that that is not so ?

*The Chairman* : I do not think we can do more than we did at Delhi on this question when we had the Railway Board before us.

*Mr. Joshi* : At Delhi the reply was the same ; they said that they gave appointments on merit. It is a great discredit to the Indian community to be told that the higher jobs go to Europeans and Anglo-Indians purely by merit and that there are not capable Indians who can fill them. If they want to discredit the Indian community I am entitled to ask if they have any proof to show that there are no Indians fit for these jobs.

*The Chairman* : Can that question be answered here ?

*Mr. Joshi* : If they cannot answer I shall ask the question somewhere else.

K-1994. Have you any Indian officers on your railway ?—Yes.

K-1995. Do you think he will agree with your statement that appointments of Europeans and Anglo-Indians are made purely on merit ?

*The Chairman* : That is not a fair question to ask.

*Mr. Joshi* : Unfortunately the railways do not send any Indian representative to our Commission and therefore I cannot ask that question anywhere. I am at a loss to know where I could get an answer.

K-1996. *Mr. Clow* : With regard to hours of work, is the work of a gangman regarded by you as continuous or intermittent ?—(*Mr. Condon*) : I understand that the Railway Board are issuing rules in the matter.

K-1997. I am not asking you in a technical sense. At present do they do continuous work ?—At the moment they are treated as continuous workers.

K-1998. What are their actual hours ?—About 12 hours during day ; excluding two hours' rest it is 10 hours net.

K-1999. In your memorandum dealing with hours of work you say " Staff whose work is arduous and continuous are given 8 hours duty. Those whose work is intermittent are on 9 to 12 hours duty." In which category does the gangman fall ?—That is in the traffic department.

K-2000. Do you definitely class them in the category of continuous workers ?—Yes, for the moment.

K-2001. Why is it not possible to give the gangmen a complete day of rest on Sunday or any other day in the week ?—We were willing to give, but the Railway Board ruled that one day in a fortnight would do.

K-2002. Do you mean that the Railway Board prevented you from doing that ?\*—There has to be some uniformity on all Railways. We therefore followed the advice of the Railway Board.

K-2003. Is that uniformity so essential ? Would any injury be done if gangmen were given one holiday in a week ?—Probably not.

K-2004. In your memorandum you say that on the metre gauge the staff gets 18 hours' rest every Sunday ?—That is equivalent to one day in a fortnight. That is what we do at present.

K-2005. *Mr. Cliff* : Do they really work 70 hours in one week and 60 hours in the next ?—Yes. They get the afternoon of every Sunday.

K-2006. Do they work every Sunday ?—Yes, every Sunday morning.

K-2007. Would it not be a fairly simple matter to arrange—assuming that the Railway Board does not stand in the way—that gangmen get one holiday in the week, not necessarily Sunday ?—It could be done.

K-2008. As regard fines, would it be in your power to limit the fines to 5 per cent. of a man's wages in a month ?—(*Mr. Armitstead*) : The maximum is two days' pay.

K-2009. That is about 7 or 8 per cent. —That is 1/13 of the wages of a daily rated man.

K-2010. Would it cause any serious inconvenience if as a general rule you limited fines to 5 per cent. of a man's monthly pay ?—No.

K-2011. In this memorandum dealing with the traffic department it is stated that district officers have full powers to fine menial staff up to a limit of 20 per cent. of pay. Is that 20 per cent. at a single fine or 20 per cent. in a month ?—(*Mr. Condon*) : That refers to the traffic department and I could not answer for that.

K-2012. Is there none among you who can speak for the traffic department ?—No.

K-2013. When you answered questions regarding the limitation of fines did you answer only for your department ?—Yes, for my department only.

\*N.B.—This reply was subsequently modified by the witness as follows :—

Mr. Clow asked whether the Railway Board had prevented this Railway in giving the gangmen a day's rest a week and the answer implied that it was so. This is not quite correct. The proposal of giving gangmen on this Railway a day's rest a week was under consideration when Railway Board circulated proposals framed by them as regards the "Rules for hours of work" in connection with the Washington and Geneva Conventions. In these proposals the gangmen were placed in a special class and it was proposed to allow them 24 hours rest a fortnight. Under these circumstances it was necessary to hold our proposals in abeyance.

K-2014. Under the system of pre-audit of pay and wages bills you are able to pay the wages only 15 days after the period for which the amount falls due ?—Yes, that is so.

K-2015. How much of the time is occupied here in preparing the bills and how much in Bombay in auditing and passing it ?—I could not say off-hand.

K-2016. Could you not give a rough estimate ? I understand that your month ends on the 20th ?—We close the month on the 20th and the salary bills are got ready on the 25th and sent to Bombay for pre-audit.

K-2017. Does it usually return from Bombay with many corrections and deductions ?—An audit department is never satisfied.

K-2018. Why should you not adopt the post audit system and pay the salaries here in time ?—That is for the Audit Department to say.

K-2019. Do you not think personally that 15 days is an unreasonable time to keep a man waiting for his wage ?—That is so.

K-2020. Do I understand that that is not the case with the salaried officers ?—No, we get our salaries on the 1st of every month.

K-2021. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : In reply to Mr. Gregory you stated that your plant could manufacture 15 engines a year normally and that there is a marginal capacity for five more engines.—Yes.

K-2022. What are your normal engine requirements on the metre gauge system per year ?—Normally 15 a year.

K-2023. So that you have got a full capacity of producing your requirements here ?—Yes.

K-2024. Then there is no necessity for importing engines ?—No, not under normal circumstances.

K-2025. Could you give the Commission a statement showing the total number of locomotives manufactured during the last five years and the number imported from other countries if any and if so what those countries are ?—Yes.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**Mr. A. Lyons and Mr. N. T. Duffy**, representatives of Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Railway employees on the B., B. and C. I. Railway, Ajmer.

K-2026. *The Chairman* : Mr. Lyons, are you an employee on the railway here at Ajmer ?—(*Mr. Lyons*) : I am on furlough preparatory to retirement.

K-2027. And you, Mr. Duffy ?—(*Mr. Duffy*) : I am employed at Abu Road as driver.

K-2028. How long have you been in service, Mr. Lyons ?—(*Mr. Lyons*) : 26 years.

K-2029. You come to the Commission as representative witnesses of the Anglo-Indian employees ?—Yes.

K-2030. We have examined your memorandum very thoroughly and I think we understand entirely what your claim is. You have an

organization, in Ajmer ?—We have a provincial branch of the Association.

K-2031. And therefore we take it that this memorandum and the other one presented by Colonel Gidney when we were at Delhi represent the views of your Association ?—Our memorandum represents the views of the railway employees in Rajputana who are members of the Association.

K-2032. The points which you raise are those which are present in our minds. I looked through your memorandum to see if there was any additional point, and I do not think I found one.—There may be one or two points that have not received due consideration.

K-2033. Possibly one or other of my colleagues may have found it. The only one that I noticed myself, which had not previously come to my attention, was the one which is at the very end of your memorandum, namely, free passages to England. You say that covenanted employees are granted free passages to England and that a similar privilege should be extended to similar employees in all other departments of the railway. Are the covenanted men of non-Asiatic domicile or Asiatic domicile ?—The privilege is not extended to all employees of non-Asiatic domicile. For instance, I am a non-Asiatic but I do not get the privilege though I was born in England. If after my retirement I were to get a free passage to England I would be thankful, but I am not allowed because I belong to a branch of the service in which covenanted men are not usually brought in.

K-2034. Has that particular point been put to the authorities, say, to the Railway Board ?—I think there is a definite rule on that subject.

K-2035. It is quite true that there is a general rule, but did you represent the case which you just now put to us ?—No, I have not represented it because I know I would be told that the rules are definite on the subject.

K-2036. Are there many others who are in just the same position as you are ?—There are dozens.

K-2037. Has the case generally been put before the Railway Board ?—I do not think it has been. (*Mr. Duffy*) : Yes, it has been.

K-2038. We see a difference of opinion here ?—(*Mr. Lyons*) : I do not know ; I am not acquainted with the facts. (*Mr. Duffy*) : The matter was represented some years ago. I think Mr. Lyons was not aware of it.

K-2039. It seems to me that it has escaped attention ?—(*Mr. Lyons*) : I do not think it can have escaped attention if there is a definite rule on the subject. The rule must have emanated from the Railway Board.

K-2040. I am only asking whether this particular point was represented to the Railway Board ?—It might have been.

K-2041. If it has not been, I think your Association will do well to represent it ?—I do not think that any representations from our Association will be taken sufficient notice of. On one

occasion we were asked if we were a registered trade union. We are not a trade union. We are an organization for a special community. The reason why we do not have anything to do with trade unionism is that we want to be considered as a separate entity. Trade unions in this country have too pronounced political aspirations, and we think that the object of trade unionism is defeated by those aspirations.

K-2042. But I can hardly think that the Railway Board would refuse to listen to, and to consider, representations from you because you are an association and not a trade union ?—We will make a note of that.

K-2043. *Colonel Gidney* : Mr. Duffy, how many years service have you had ?—I have 21 years on the railway and 8 years in the military, in all 29.

K-2044. And you, Mr. Lyons ?—26 years' service.

K-2045. Do you know of any subordinate in the B., B. and C. I. Railway who has been promoted to be an official ?—(*Mr. Duffy*) : Not in my department.

K-2046. Is it the practice to confer instead an honorary rank on the eve of one's retirement ?—(*Mr. Lyons*) : It is few and far between.

K-2047. In your memorandum there is a statement made regarding overtime and Sunday work. A question about this was asked of a previous witness and I think a full reply was not given. Can you tell the Commission what you mean by overtime and Sunday work ? I see from your statement that the running staff of the locomotive department are allowed the following allowances : trip allowance, night allowance, day allowance, pay for detentions on road, breach of rest, double pay for Sundays and Christmas Day, leave allowance reckoned at 75 per cent. of the average monthly allowances for the previous 12 months. You also state that a traffic man is denied these allowances except mileage and though he may be 20 hours on the road, which is not an uncommon occurrence, he only gets paid for the trip. We heard from the railway administration that that was not so. Will you explain what you mean by this ?—What I mean by saying that the running staff may be 20 hours on the road is this : it has very often occurred that a man left Ajmer one day for a very long run and he has not reached the end of his journey before the same time the following day, he having had to wait for 7 to 8 hours on the road—perhaps not due to the fault of the railway, but owing to the very heavy traffic trains at the different crossing stations getting held up, with the result that men are detained very long hours on the road ; and there have been cases where detentions of 15 to 20 hours have taken place.

K-2048. *Sir Alexander Murray* : These are exceptional cases and not normal ?—Not exceptional during the busy season.

K-2049. I thought you were saying that they were exceptional cases ?—No.

K-2050. *Colonel Gidney* : During the busy season do you submit that the men do not have a proper amount of rest ?—Yes.

K-2051. Are they paid for overtime ?—No.

K-2052. You mean to say that the loco are paid this and not the traffic ?—For the traffic, only mileage is allowed, and 50 per cent. extra is allowed for working goods trains.

K-2053. Are the Guard and the Driver equally responsible for the safety of the train ?—Yes ; the Guard is as much responsible as the Driver.

K-2054. Then your contention is that they should have equal allowances ?—I do.

K-2055. Is the Anglo-Indian community very much in the hands of the money-lenders ?—Yes, to a very great extent.

K-2056. What do you think this is due to ? Is it due to extravagance in living or what ?—No. I should say it is due to the low rates of pay.

K-2057. Then how would you cure that, besides the usual credit and loan societies ?—Give him more money.

K-2058. Suppose in addition every Anglo-Indian is allowed to insure his life ?—It would not be a bad suggestion, but I do not see how, by insuring his life, you would improve his position on this earth.

K-2059. Suppose the Railway administration consents to pay the debts of all its employees using the provident fund as security, do you think once a man gets out of the debt, it would enable him to work better ?—Yes, I think so ; debt has a very detrimental effect on the efficiency of the men.

K-2060. I want you to tell the Commission what you think, without any extravagances, is the minimum cost of living for an Anglo-Indian lad living alone, say, a Ticket Collector, living in Rajputana or Ajmer ?—No boy can live under Rs. 70 a month.

K-2061. Does that mean the cost of his bare food or clothing charges also ?—Only the bare minimum expenses ; even then he cannot feed himself too well.

K-2062. Do you think that Rs. 33 per mensem would be a starvation wage for an Anglo-Indian lad ?—It is a ridiculous wage.

K-2063. In your memorandum you have made a statement that Loco Foremen belonging to the Anglo-Indian community are all given inferior stations. We heard a statement given to-day by a witness " all the best stations were given to European Foremen because they were senior in service. Do you know of any Anglo-Indian who, though senior, is given a small station ?—Yes ; I think one is at Mepsana who is a senior Foreman.

K-2064. So it is not correct to say that " better stations are given by seniority " ?—No, that is not true.

K-2065. It is a fact that when an Anglo-Indian or domiciled European is to be promoted in the workshops to the post of an Assistant Foreman or Foreman, he is often transferred to another department to evade such promotion ?—I am afraid I cannot answer that question.

K-2066. What do you think, Mr. Duffy ?—(*Mr. Duffy*) : It is so.

K-2067. You talk about the 1923 revision of pay and you make a comparison in the memorandum that, whereas the pay of the loco department remains as it was before that date or has been slightly reduced,

there has been a general reduction in the pay of the traffic department ?—  
(*Mr. Lyons*) : Yes.

K-2068. Although the responsibilities of the traffic department are equal and at times heavier than the loco, they are in a worse position so far as pay is concerned as compared with the loco ?—Yes, they are in an inferior position.

K-2069. You think this is one of the serious grievances of the men ?  
—It is a very big grievance.

K-2070. There is a statement made in your memorandum about housing accommodation. I know that the B., B. and C. I. Railway is very liberal in that matter ; I gratefully admit that publicly. But is it a fact that there are cases in which a family of 8 or 9 is provided with very very small houses ?—We have cases like that.

K-2071. And you do not think it is wrong ?—I think it is wrong ; there is no difference made between a man with a large family and a man with a small one. The houses are built according to particular standards and in allotting them no consideration is shown whether a man has a big family or not ; he has to occupy the house to which he is entitled according to his pay.

K-2072. If he has a daughter of 15 or 16 and a boy of the same age they will be huddled together with the rest of the children in one small room ?—Yes.

K-2073. And you do not think that is right ?—No.

K-2074. What would you suggest ?—Quarters be given according to the size of one's family.

K-2075. A very important branch of the railway is the supervising staff ?—Yes.

K-2076. There is a complaint made in your memorandum that very little accommodation is provided for this staff when touring their district ?—That is true. At times I have had to accommodate myself in a little space about 8 ft. square. After I have settled down to get a little sleep half a dozen other inspectors have come in and turned me out and sent me to sleep under a tree, saying "you have had some sleep, now let us get some." There is not sufficient accommodation. On the other hand the officers' rest houses are everything that can be desired, although the officers seldom occupy them. If these rest houses were used by the inspectors it would be a great help. The rest house consists of one room. It very often happens that more than half a dozen inspectors turn up at the same time. At the present moment we have a big fair on in Ajmer. During this time many inspectors have to come in for special duty. There is no place for these people to put up except one small room ; they have to occupy the public waiting rooms, which is very objectionable. I used to turn them out of the waiting rooms and get into trouble ; there was no other place for them to go.

K-2077. Are you familiar with the railway hospital here ?—Yes.



K-2078 I have no desire to decry the railway hospital administration, or the work performed by the Minto Nursing Association, but you have made a point in your memorandum of the nursing staff that is appointed to the railway hospital at Ajmer. You state that the nurses of this railway hospital are Lady Minto nurses ; is that so ?—Yes, they are.

K-2079. Do you know what salary they get ?—No.

K-2080. Do you know what the accommodation of the hospital is ?—There are six beds in the female European ward and six beds in the European male ward.

K-2081. And many nurses are there to attend these 12 cases ?—Three Minto nurses and one matron. Lately we have engaged an Anglo-Indian nurse, and there is a probationer.

K-2082. All this staff is engaged to attend to these 12 cases ?—Yes. The Minto nurses do occasionally go into the Indian ward to give an injection or something of that kind, but there is no general nursing done by them in the Indian ward.

K-2083. I was told yesterday by the medical officer of the hospital that the Lady Minto nurses do not attend the Indian sick ; but they supervise the nursing ?—Yes, that is so.

K-2084. Is there a free motor car placed at the disposal of these nurses ?—Yes.

K-2085. Are there not many well qualified domiciled European and Anglo-Indian nurses all over India ?—Yes, there are dozens of them who cannot get work.

K-2086. Does the Anglo-Indian community resent this exclusion of employment ?—I certainly think there should not be an outside institution working in our hospital at all, when we have numbers of our own nurses walking about the streets looking for work.

K-2087. Do you think the railway should stop recruiting nurses from the Lady Minto Association and employ the well-trained nurses of this country ?—It is imperative that they should do so. Anglo-Indian nurses have been trained in the large hospitals in Calcutta and Bombay and they are well qualified to attend to the Indians ; they are more in sympathy with the Indians.

K-2088. I take it that most of the Lady Minto nurses do not know the language of the country ?—There are a good many disadvantages ; there is a lack of sympathy on their part towards the people of the country.

K-2089. *Mr. Gregory* : You suggest in your memorandum under "Recruitment" that a register should be maintained and applicants' names registered in order of application. Do you mean by that that merit should not be taken into consideration ?—Merit ought to be taken into consideration. I am talking of first appointments. My point is that applications are not dealt with in the order in which they are received, granting of course that they are all of equal merit.

K-2090. In your memorandum, you give a bond which you propose should be substituted for the bond at present being used. Did you ever submit a copy of that bond to the administration?—I am not aware of the fact

K-2091. I have compared that bond with the existing one and there seem to be very few differences?—There is only one difference in paragraph 1 “That my appointment is probationary”; I think we have put the words “probationary” in place of “temporary”, and in place of “being dismissed at any time” we have said “subject to confirmation within a period of 12 months”, which is the Government’s rule.

K-2092. Have you submitted your proposed bond to the administration for consideration?—No, my Branch has not.

K-2093. In regard to secondary schools for your community, are you aware that the grant-in-aid which has been granted previously and is still being granted is in lieu of providing secondary schools?—I do not know whether that is so. It does not say so; it simply tells us that it is grant-in-aid to enable us to send our children to hill schools. Most people cannot afford to send their children to hill schools even with the assistance of the grant; the grant is not sufficient.

K-2094. You say in connection with subordinates holding honorary ranks that they officiate and carry out the duties of gazetted officers. Do you know of any case where the responsibilities have been increased and no charge allowance has been paid to a non-gazetted officer officiating as an officer?—After all he gets the pay of a subordinate, and the charge allowance would not bring his pay up to the maximum which he is allowed by the railway. I was acting as Assistant Traffic Superintendent in 1917, and when the question of my charge allowance was considered I was told that I was not to get it but was to get my travelling allowance instead, which was less than the charge allowance; but even if I had got the charge allowance, which I think was Rs. 100, it would only have brought my pay to Rs. 375, which is less than the minimum pay of a junior officer.

K-2095. The point you make here is that no consideration is taken of the extra responsibilities and that you ought to get an allowance for taking over the extra responsibilities?—That is not our point. Our point is that we should be made *pucca* officers; there should be no question of being honorary. Why should we be honorary when we are perfectly qualified to act in that appointment? I know one case of a man, Mr. Lindsay Smith, some years ago, who was on this line. He was in charge of the branch district on several occasions, and he went away as an honorary Assistant Traffic Superintendent. He was a very efficient man.

K-2096. Are you aware that schools exist at Bulsar, Bombay and Ajmer for training traffic probationers?—No, I was not aware of the fact, and there is not any in Ajmer.

K-2097. There is no school?—There is no school; they were all trained under me. I have trained most of them that have gone through

Ajmer. They get very little assistance ; it is not sufficient for them. I could not give my time to these people coming along all day and asking me questions ; I could only run round occasionally ; it was totally inadequate as a training.

K-2098. *Mr. Govind Prasad* : You have been in charge of the Ajmer station for the last three or four years ?—For the last eleven years.

K-2099. Do you know that at train time and at any time when the labourers have to come there have been accidents between the station and the carriage gates ?—There have been several accidents during shops hours owing to shop-men crossing the line.

K-2100. I think there are about four or five every year or more ?—I could not tell you how many ; there may be two or three.

K-2101. Which is the shortest route from the city to the carriage gates ? Is it by crossing the lines ?—Certainly, crossing the lines through the main gate is the nearest.

K-2102. What precaution do you suggest with regard to this danger ?—There is a road for him to go round, why does he not take the road.

K-2103. Which is the nearest road ?—Along the Beawar Road, outside railway limits.

K-2104. The gate is on this side ; there is no gate on that road ?—There is a straight road there, or he can go over the Martindale Bridge.

K-2105. That would mean going a long way ?—He will have to go a longer distance, it is true ; that is the nearest road.

K-2106. How long do you think it will take them to go from the city to the gate ?—if they go by the Beawar Road, it is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles and it would probably take them 40 or 50 minutes.

K-2107. *Mr. Cliff* : In your memorandum you speak of this particular railway, and you say : “ In this respect the percentage of appointments to the superior grade from the ranks of subordinates are lower on ‘ the Railways ’ ”. Is that true ?—My experience teaches me that is quite true.

K-2108. Have you any figures to bear that out ?—I have not got any figures ; it is a fact.

K-2109. Have you ever made application to have the right of appeal ?—We have the right of appeal, but it is left to the discretion of our immediate superiors as to whether that right can be exercised. It very often happens that a man wishes to appeal to the General Traffic Manager or the Agent ; he is told that he cannot do so and the case is dropped.

K-2110. Is there an opportunity of getting through to the General Manager by appeal ?—Not in that case, unless he writes direct ; you must go through the proper channel.

K-2111. Can an official stand in the way of that appeal going through to the superior authority ?—He does do so ; there are cases in which the Agent has been addressed and it has got no further than the General Traffic Manager or the Traffic Superintendent, who has not thought it necessary to push it on.

K-2112. Would you say that the Anglo-Indian community has a fair standard of education ?—They have a fair standard of education.

K-2113. Would you say they are improvident ?—They are improvident. I should like to qualify that last answer. When I say they are improvident I mean owing to their high standard of living, I do not mean through extravagance.

*The Chairman* : Not that they are improvident but that they are unable to save.

K-2114. *Mr. Cliff* : A person may be unable to save, yet may not be improvident. Speaking of this community would you say that they are not improvident ?—I do not exactly understand the question.

K-2115. You answered a question of Col. Gidney and said that a good many of this community were in the hands of money-lenders ?—That is true.

K-2116. Are a good many of this community improvident ?—They are in that respect.

K-2117. *Mr. Ahmed* : In the terms of your appointment is there a condition that you will be given a free passage to England ?—No.

K-2118. You were originally recruited in this country on certain conditions ?—That is so.

K-2119. None of those conditions give you a free passage to England. Free passages to England are usually granted under the rules of the company for certain All-India Services ?—Yes, that is one of the conditions of my service.

K-2120. Are you aware that the Member in Charge of Railways of the Government of India has classified you as Indians for the purposes of service ?—Yes.

K-2121. If you agree that Anglo-Indians also are Indians, your home is in India, and why do you require a free passage to England ?—They should be given equal opportunities.

*Col. Gidney* : This paragraph to which Mr. Ahmed is referring cannot be interpreted in that way. It says that covenanted employees of non-Asiatic domicile in the loco and engineering departments only are granted free passages to England, and that a similar privilege be extended to similar employees, i.e., non-Asiatic European employees in all other departments of the railway. The Lee Commission recommendations are to be applied to them. I think Mr. Ahmed is mistaking it.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## (RAILWAYS)

## Twenty-third Meeting.

BOMBAY

Saturday, 23rd November, 1929.

## PRESENT :

The Right Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.	
Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E.	Mr. JOHN CLIFF.
Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.
Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.	DIWAN CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.
Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S. ( <i>Medical Assessor</i> ).	Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.
Mr HOOSEINBHOY A. LALLJI, M.L.C.	} <i>Assistant Commissioners.</i>
Mr. R. S. ASAVLE, M.L.C.	
Lt.-Col. H. A. J. GIDNEY, M.L.A.	
Mr M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E.	
Dr. (Miss) T. G. H. CAMA.	} <i>Lady Assessors.</i>
Mrs. K. WAGH.	
Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.	} <i>Joint Secretaries.</i>
Mr. A. DIBDIN.	

Mr. S. C. JOSHI and Mr. P. S. BAKHLE, representatives of the G. I. P. Railway Staff Union.

K-2122. *The Chairman* : Mr. Joshi, you, I think, are the Secretary of the Union ?—(*Mr. Joshi*) : Yes.

K-2123. Mr. Bakhle, in what capacity you have come before us ?—(*Mr. Bakhle*) : As the General Secretary of the Union.

K-2124. Mr. Joshi, will you tell the Commission how long your Union has been in existence ?—(*Mr. Joshi*) : Since 1921.

K-2125. And how many members has it now ?—It has 5,700 members.

K-2126. Is it confined to the staff of the G. I. P. Railway ?—Yes.

K-2127. Is it the only Union ?—There is one more union by the name of the G. I. P. Railwaymen's Union which was established in 1927.

K-2128. Does the second Union cover the same class of members as yours ?—Yes.

K-2129. Therefore, there are two Unions competing for the same class of men ?—Yes.

K-2130. Have any efforts been made to amalgamate the two Unions ?—Efforts were made to have an amalgamation but the methods of working are so different that it is not possible to have an amalgamation. The policy of the Staff Union is to avoid strikes as far as possible whereas our experience is that the other Union is in favour of strikes for any and every thing.

K-2131. It is a fundamental difference of policy, in your view that prevents the amalgamation of the two Unions ?—Yes.

K-2132. Is the number of members of your Union increasing or decreasing ?—It is increasing. Last December it was only 2,500 ; it is increasing steadily, and we expect it to increase very much within the course of the next few months.

K-2133. Is your Union recognized by the railway ?—Yes.

K-2134. Does the railway meet you from time to time ?—Yes. Whenever we write to them that we want to discuss certain matters, they receive us in deputation ; personal interviews are also granted to me as the Secretary of the Union.

K-2135. But that is on your application ?—No ; sometimes the Agent invites me of his own accord and we discuss the question informally ; if the Agent thinks it necessary to have an interview with the deputation then, of course, he grants it.

K-2136. So that you have free access to the Agent for discussing the grievances of the men ?—Yes.

K-2137. But I gather there is at present no arrangement for meeting the representatives of the Union at regular intervals ?—No.

K-2138. You told us that the membership of your Union was 5,700. What is the total number of men employed by the Company ?—About 117,000.

K-2139. Therefore, at present your Union comprises only about 5 per cent. of the total number ?—Yes, but our activities are confined only from Bombay to Sholapur ; we have not extended our activities on the north-east line ; only on the southern side of the line we have got members. About 4,000 of our members are between Bombay and Kalyan.

K-2140. What proportion does that bear to the number of men engaged in that part of the line ?—About 60 per cent., excluding the workshop people.

K-2141. I understand that. As on other lines, the workshops are, as a rule, separately organized ?—Yes, since 1921 ; but the clerical staff in the workshops belongs to our Union.

K-2142. In your memorandum you tell us that out of 150 subjects which you raised with the Company you were successful in 35 cases in getting a remedy on the points that you put forward ?—Yes.

K-2143. Is that in your experience a fairly good proportion ?—No, it is not. Our submission is that on important points our representations have not been successful. The cases in which we were successful concerned individual cases though they, no doubt, involved general principles ; but we have not been successful in matters of dismissals and discharges of the people.

K-2144. On the G. I. P. Railway is there any special officer appointed for dealing with the personnel ?—An officer was appointed whose duty was to investigate into the complaints of the workshop people.

K-2145. But not with regard to your men ?—We had applied to them that the same facilities should be extended to the other staff but that was refused.

K-2146. In your opinion, it is a good practice that a large railway should have an officer ?—I think so ; it would help a good deal in having individual cases at least enquired into by that officer, and a representative of the Union.

K-2147. You think that if such an officer exists, he and the Secretary of the Union could dispose of a number of minor questions ?—I think so ; I had also suggested this to the Agent, but up to now no steps have been taken in that direction.

K-2148. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : You say in your memorandum “ The railway labour is scandalously low-paid.” As compared with what labour ?—As compared with other classes of labour in Bombay and in other parts of India.

K-2149. Further on you say that the average earnings of an Indian is Rs. 53 per annum, which works out to under Rs. 4½ a month ?—I am not referring to the Indian worker ; Rs. 53 is the average, taking the population of India as a whole.

K-2150. If the average earning of a man in India is only Rs. 4-8-0 a month, could it be said fairly that the average wage of the railway worker is scandalously low ?—I think there are many people who are not earning anything at all.

K-2151. What do you think is the average wage of a labourer on your railway ?—It will not be possible for me to state exactly what will be the average, but I think it will not be more than Rs. 35 a month.

K-2152. You maintain therefore that the average wage of Rs. 35 a month is ‘ scandalously low ’ although you further on admit that the average earning of an inhabitant of this country is only Rs. 4-7-0 ?—When I say Rs. 35 is the average it will include the wages of those who are drawing Rs. 200 or 300.

K-2153. What is the lowest wage ?—The lowest is Rs. 8.

K-2154. For a full-grown man ?—No, for boys.

K-2155. Take a full-grown man ?—It will be Rs. 19 a month.

K-2156. The lowest wage under your system is Rs. 19 which is over three times as much as the average wage of an inhabitant here ?—The daily wage earner gets also 6 as. or 8 as. a day ; it all depends upon the nature of work that the worker is doing.

K-2157. But I think you will admit that the words “ scandalously low-paid ” will probably be much more rightly attributed to those who get Rs. 4 to 5 a month rather than to those who get Rs. 19 a month ?—There are few people who get Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 ; some people do not get anything at all.

K-2158. Then how do they live ?—They depend upon the earnings of their relatives. For instance, in a family of 5 or 6 only one man earns and the other 4 or 5 are dependent upon him.

K-2159. You say : “ The unemployed are generally maintained by their other relations out of their earnings. This has a very serious consequence on the average earning of an Indian, which is said to be Rs. 53 only per annum ”.—The figure that I have given is the average earning of an Indian, taking into consideration those who do not earn.

K-2160. What you really mean is the average income and not the average earnings ?—Yes.

K-2161. What would you say was the average earning of an Indian all over India ?—From Rs. 15 to Rs. 20.

K-2162. Including the Province of Madras ?—Yes.

K-2163. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Can you tell me how much wages have been increased since the beginning of the war ?—After 1919 there was an increase of 50 per cent. in the wages of some classes of labour.

K-2164. Have you any figures to prove that ?—No.

K-2165. You state in your memorandum ; “ My Union urges upon the Commission to make a recommendation to the Government of India for the grant of the general minimum demands of the Railway employees. Unless this is done my Union strongly apprehends that the unrest and heart-burning among the workers will assume a serious turn, for which none but the Railway authorities and the Government alone will be responsible.” Do I read that to mean that unless you get the rates of wages set out on page 11 of the “ Union Herald ” something serious may happen ?—Yes.

K-2166. Is this in the nature of an ultimatum ?—We placed this point of view before the Railway Board and before Sir George Rainy in May last. At that time we stated that if the financial difficulties in the way of Government in granting these demands were so great, they should earmark a certain amount year by year for the purpose of improving the service condition of the work-people, and that some classes of workers should be selected, or certain places should be selected, and that the scales of pay and other service conditions should be improved out of the sum that might be set aside. In that way, in the course of four or five years, an improvement might be made throughout India in respect of all classes of workers. That is what we suggested to Sir George Rainy.

K-2167. What do you actually mean when you say that unless this Commission make the recommendation you suggest, something dreadful



may happen ?—An interim report should be made to Government by the Commission that the pay, prospects and other service conditions of the railway workers should be sympathetically considered.

K-2168. You make it incumbent on the Commission to recommend this increase in wages, otherwise something serious may happen. That is how I read your statement. You, as representing the employees, now tell us that all you want the Commission to do is to give sympathetic consideration to your demands and to make such recommendations as the Commission might consider advisable in the circumstances ?—That is what I mean.

K-2169. And in the meantime you will not excite the workers under your control in any way ?—That will not depend upon me. It will be the workers' choice. The situation has been going from bad to worse day by day, and it will not be possible for the workers to continue under the existing conditions.

K-2170. When we were at Delhi we were told by the Railway Board that the average increase in wages paid to railway workers was 124 per cent. higher than it was in 1914. Have you anything to put before us which will show that that estimate is wrong ?—That includes the pay of the officers.

K-2171. No, it does not. This is only the pay of the lower paid workers, excluding clerks and chief officers ?—There was an agreement between the railway administration and the staff in 1919, called the Manmad Agreement, wherein the workers were promised a 50 per cent. increase. Since then no increase in pay has been granted.

K-2172. But you received grain allowances ?—They were included at the time.

K-2173. Can you give the Commission any statement showing what the average earnings of your workers were in 1914 ; what they were in 1920 ; and what they are to-day ?—I am not in a position to give figures.

K-2174. Why are you not ? You are the executive officer of the workers. If you go to the employers and say " Please give increased wages ", surely it is your duty to get figures showing what the wages were in 1914, what they were in 1920, and what they are to-day ?—I discussed this question with the Agent. I stated then that if I was given the rates of wages as they existed in 1914 from the records available, I would be able to show what the percentage increase was ; but the Agent refused to supply me with that information. As there was no union in existence in 1914, and as I have no access to the records of the administration, it is hardly possible for me to give any reliable statistics.

K-2175. *Mr. Ahmed* : What would you say is the minimum living wage for a worker, his wife and two children ?—We have prepared a family budget, and the figure comes out to Rs. 42.

K-2176. If a worker is now earning from Rs. 15 to Rs. 20, that leaves a balance of Rs. 25 to Rs. 27 of which he is in need ?—Yes.

K-2177. Your Union has put forward a demand for a minimum living wage. What was the reply ?—I deal with that in my memorandum. The

reply was ; “ It is not possible to consider this question at once. It will have to be considered in consultation with the Agents, and also having regard to the interests of the taxpayers.”

K-2178. Has that consultation with the Agents taken place yet ?—No.

K-2179. What is the living wage of similar workers in other countries ?—I cannot say.

K-2180. At any rate it is much higher than in this country ?—Yes.

K-2181. If a higher minimum living wage is paid by railway companies in other countries, I suppose the railway companies in this country can afford to pay it ?—Yes.

K-2182. The higher officers of railways in this country are receiving more remuneration than similar officers of railways in other countries ?—Yes.

K-2183. But the workers get a lower wage here ?—Yes.

K-2184. And if the wages of the higher officers are reduced to the level of similar officers of other countries the workers will be paid a living wage very easily, and at the same time the railway will have the same amount of profit as it has now ?—Yes.

K-2185. *Mr. Cliff* : Your memorandum states that representations were made to the G. I. P. Railway for recognition of the Union. Did you receive any reply from the G. I. P. Railway Agent in response ?—Yes, we received a reply to the effect that the Agent would not recognize any of the unions.

K-2186. Was any reason given ?—No reasons were given. (*Mr. Bakhle*) : One reason was given, namely, that as the administration were contemplating the introduction of staff councils it was not necessary to recognize the unions.

K-2187. Is it possible to furnish the Commission with a copy of that reply ?—We will do so.

K-2188. You state something about the Agent saying that the staff councils had no reference to the unions. Can you amplify that ?—(*Mr. Joshi*) : The staff councils consist of elected representatives of the staff. But the constitution lays it down that the councils are not entitled to discuss any questions involving financial matters.

K-2189. How would you explain “ financial matters ?—Any question of increase in pay or decrease in hours of work, which would involve additional expenditure to the administration. Such questions cannot be discussed by the staff councils.

K-2190. Therefore the staff councils would be prohibited from discussing the question of a general revision of wages of a grade of labour ?—Yes.

K-2191. Would they be prohibited from discussing the question of a reduction of hours of any grade of labour ?—Yes, because that would involve financial questions. Rule 7 of the constitution of the staff councils

says : " The following may be regarded as amongst the more specific functions falling under clause 5 (c)—

- (a) Suggestions for the satisfactory arrangement of working hours, duties, breaks, time recording, etc.
- (b) Matters in which the railway and its employees have a common interest, such as co-operation to secure greater efficiency and economy, increased business, the well-being of the staff, such as sanitary and municipal matters, co-operative stores, recreation institutions, etc.
- (c) The local application and interpretation of any agreement relating to general rules issued by the Railway in regard to salaries, wages, hours of duty, conditions of service, etc."

K-2192. Can you point to a clause which empowers you to discuss wages or hours of labour ?—No. These subjects are excluded.

K-2193. It says something about interpreting an agreement. Has the Union entered into an agreement with the railway company in respect to any conditions of service ?—No, except at Manmad. There was an agreement come to there in 1919.

K-2194. You say " Negotiations in such matters either individually or through the Union, have also proved to be futile." What do you mean by that ?—That is in regard to matters of pay or reduction in working hours, or in regard to questions about debits or dismissals and discharges. These questions were placed before the administration and Government by representations.

K-2195. I want to deal with this particular railway ?—It applies to this particular railway too. I myself have submitted detailed representations, supported by facts and figures, as to why an increase in wages is necessary. I discussed the question also at two or three meetings with the Agent and with other officers of the railway. No decision has yet been arrived at.

K-2196. I gather that your Union has been recognized since 1928 ?—Yes.

K-2197. Can you tell me whether, as a result of any representations made to the Agent, you have secured any increase of pay for any grade of labour ?—No, not one.

K-2198. Can you say, in your experience, whether the Agent of this Railway has in fact during recent years raised the rate of the wages of any grade of labour ?—To my knowledge he has not.

K-2199. The Railway Board say that they have no doubt the Agents of the railways would be prepared to take all feasible measures with a view to improving the rates. That is dealing with the question of a minimum living wage. I want to know whether you have any knowledge within the last four years of the Agent of this Railway raising the rates of wages in any lower grades of labour ?—No, I have not.

K-2200. In reading this memorandum it seems to me that the policy of your Union is to pursue the method of negotiation in endeavouring to

settle, by discussion with the railway administration, any matters arising out of employment ?—Yes.

K-2201. It is recorded in your memorandum that the Union has, all along, been urging the setting up of a joint council with equal representation upon it of the administration and the unions. In your opinion, is your Union, with its managing committee, competent to deal with matters, in negotiation with the Agent, arising out of employment ?—It is competent to do so.

K-2202. Have you made application to the administration for a joint council ?—No, not in writing, but I have had a personal discussion with the Agent. He told me that he would discuss the matter when the Railway Conference met at Simla. Since then I have not received any reply from him.

K-2203. When did this discussion take place ?—In August of this year.

K-2204. When did the Railway Conference take place ?—In September.

K-2205. Have you broached this matter again to the Agent ?—No.

K-2206. Have you spoken to him informally ?—No ; because he has not invited me to do so. I go only on invitation, not otherwise.

K-2207. You told the Chairman that you had free access. I understand the terms and conditions are that all representations should be submitted in writing to the Agent. Do I understand that you can go officially to the Agent without submitting representations in writing ?—No. Unless he invites me it is not possible for me to go direct to him.

K-2208. Surely that is not free access ?—Only in this sense—that if he invites me I can then go and discuss matters with him.

K-2209. You state : “ All sorts of obstacles are thrown in the way of the union. Requests for permission to hold meetings of railway workers on railway premises after office hours are refused.” Have you made requests to have meetings in places belonging to the railway administration ?—Yes. Not only that, but I have asked for permission to be given for the holding of meetings at the institutes, when the managing committees of the institutes have been prepared to give permission ; but it has been refused.

K-2210. Was any reason given ?—The reason given was that there might be other members of the institute who might not be members of the Union and that the holding of meetings might interfere with their legitimate rights.

K-2211. But I understood you to say that the management committees were prepared to give you permission ?—Yes.

K-2212. We are told by the Agent in his memorandum submitted to the Commission that in 1919 a general increase of pay was given to the staff to meet the increase in the cost of living caused by the war. We are also told that towards the end of 1919 new scales of pay were promised to all grades of workers on the G. I. P. Railway. It is recorded that two strikes took place and that the actual increase was given in 1920. When was the actual increase of pay given ?—In the latter half of 1920.

K-2213. Was there any increase of wages given before the employees made the request ?—No, except by way of war allowances.

K-2214. What does “ war allowances ” mean ?—A percentage increase was given over their pay on account of the high cost of living during the war.

K-2215. Do I understand that these war allowances were increases on the existing rate of pay, and that they were given prior to 1919 ?—Yes, after 1914 some war allowance was sanctioned, and subsequently it was merged in the pay in 1920.

K-2216. Is it possible to say, taking the whole staff, what was the war allowance which was being paid at the end of 1919 ?—It differed according to the rate of pay. It was from 25 to 15 per cent.

K-2217. I understand there are differences between the employees and the administration with regard to medical certificates. Would your Union be prepared in a case of dispute, for the matter to be submitted to a medical referee ?—Yes.

K-2218. *Colonel Russell* : You say that there are groups of common latrines and that common water taps are provided for general use. What other system would you suggest ?—The provisions made are not sufficient.

K-2219. It is a little misleading to say “ common ”, ?—They are common for the 40 rooms occupied.

K-2220. The method is right but the number is wrong ?—Yes.

K-2221. Then you say that at road side stations practically no arrangement whatever is made for water supply. Is it a fact that at some stations there is no railway well ?—That is so.

K-2222. You state that the medical facilities are not sufficient. Will you elaborate that ?—There are very few hospitals. In order to get medicine the men have to go long distances, and it is not often possible to do that. Also the medicines are not so good as they ought to be. They are almost useless.

K-2223. Why do you say they are not good ?—Their experience is that they are not cured by the medicines from these dispensaries and hospitals.

K-2224. How would you get over the difficulty of distance ?—More hospitals should be established at different centres at convenient places, and the hospital staff should be increased.

K-2225. You say that the common diseases are malaria, cholera and small-pox. Is cholera very common ?—Yes. It is common amongst railway workers.

K-2226. And small-pox ?—Yes, both.

K-2227. Have you any statistics to prove that ?—No.

K-2228. Is it not a fact that railway employees are vaccinated before employment ?—Yes ; but they live with the members of their family and they do get attacks of small-pox.

K-2229. You speak about the harassment of segregation. I suppose you do not object to segregation in cases of small-pox ?—No.

K-2230. Then what do you mean by "harassment"?—The patients are taken long distances to the segregation camps, and they are not given proper treatment, especially the low paid staff.

K-2231. You mean there are no proper infectious diseases hospitals?—That is what I mean.

K-2232. *Mr. Gregory* : Have you any statistics on which you base the statement that medical arrangements are not sufficient? Do you know the extent to which medical arrangements have been supplied?—Yes. I have no statistics. I base that statement on information received from the men. The Railway will not give me any information at all on any of these points.

K-2233. You say that you assess as far as possible the genuineness of any complaints which are made by the men. What machinery have you in your Union for doing that?—We have a works council, and any complaints which are made to us are discussed by that council. Full information is received from the complainant, especially if he has made representations and has received replies. We take into consideration all the correspondence which has passed between him and the administration. We also make enquiries from other people who were working at the place where the complainant was.

K-2234. Do you do that in every case?—In almost every case.

K-2235. *Colonel Gidney* : How long has your Union been in existence?—Since 1921.

K-2236. Is yours the oldest union on the G. I. P. Railway?—Yes.

K-2237. Are you aware that there is an older union which has existed since 1897?—That is the Amalgamated Society.

K-2238. That is a much older union than yours?—Yes, but the Indian staff are not members of that union.

K-2239. There are a number of Indian members in it?—I do not know.

K-2240. You make a statement about the heavy punishment inflicted by way of fines, cautions, etc. Have you any cases with which you can support that statement?—Yes, many.

K-2241. Can you supply the Commission with them?—Yes; we have also submitted these cases to the Railway Board.

K-2242. You refer to the relationship between the staff and the rank and file. You say they are not cordial. Is that the fault of the staff?—No, it is the fault of the officers.

K-2243. It is because they will not approach you or will not allow you to approach them?—Not only that, but they actually threaten men if they take any complaints to their union. Whenever a man takes a complaint to his union he is always in fear of being victimized. I have cases of such threats being carried into effect by the officers. There have been three cases of actual dismissals of men because they came to me and asked me to represent their cases and I did so.

K-2244. You talk of victimization owing to the practice of men producing medical certificates. Have you found this victimization prevailing since your Union has been recognized?—Yes. Only this month three people were dismissed simply because they induced other men to join the Union.

K-2245. You wish the Commission to understand that the railway officials are hostile to the unions?—Certainly; at least some of them.

K-2246. You make a very helpful suggestion about eye diseases which supports the memorandum which I submitted to the Railway Board. Do you know of many employees who have been discharged owing to diseases of the eye which they have contracted by reason of their work on the Railway,—cases which you can trace?—I think I will be able to trace some, but I know of cases where men have been discharged because they have failed to pass the medical test.

K-2247. You mean by that that a man who passed the eye-sight test when he first joined the railway is found subsequently to have defective eye-sight brought about by the nature of his work on the railway?—Yes.

K-2248. You want the Commission to realise that the Workmen's Compensation Act should be applied to such cases?—Yes.

K-2249. *Mr. Asavle* : What have you to say about the housing accommodation of the labouring classes in the G. I. P. Railway?—We have given our views in our memorandum.

K-2250. Yes, but I am referring to the lowest class of labour. Do you think that at present housing accommodation is provided by the railway company?—Yes, to some extent, it has provided.

K-2251. But not to all the labouring classes?—No.

K-2252. The railway company being the largest employers of labour, do you not think that it should provide housing accommodation for all its employees?—Yes, it is necessary.

K-2253. You have said that Rs. 42 would be a living wage for a man, his wife and two children. But do you know whether there are any dependants on this man or not in his native place?—We know there are dependants, and that is the reason why we have submitted that there should be an annual increment on the time-scale basis; the wages, for instance, should not start with Rs. 40 and end with Rs. 45. Our complaint is that at present the wages begin with Rs. 20 or Rs. 22 and end with only Rs. 25 or Rs. 26, so that; the man finds it very difficult after some time to maintain his family as his necessities grow day by day. In these circumstances we have recommended that the wages should be on the time-scale basis.

K-2254. Do you know that those who have not been provided with housing accommodation by the railway company have to pay heavy rents outside?—Yes.

K-2255. Do you know what rent they pay?—It differs according to the locality in which one lives.

K-2256. You have got many members in your Union who live in Bombay ; you must have enquired of them as to what rent they pay ?—They pay from Rs. 7 to Rs. 15 ; it differs according to the class of the employee.

K-2257. What about the lowest class ?—From Rs. 5 to Rs. 10.

K-2258. Do they get sufficient medical help ?—No. As I said, the general belief is that only three kinds of medicines, namely, quinine, magnesia and one other, the name of which I forget, are provided, and for any and every case only these three medicines are made use of.

K-2259. Do you mean to say that whatever disease a man may be suffering from, he is given only these three medicines ?—I cannot say definitely. We were reported that only three kinds of medicines had been provided.

K-2260. In answer to one of the questions put to you, you said that almost all the work-people are vaccinated before they are employed ?—It is one of the rules that it should be done.

K-2261. Are these labouring classes examined as to whether they have been vaccinated or not ?—I am not aware of that.

K-2262. You said a while ago that there are dependants on the man who earns. May I know what should be the average living wage in that case ?—That will depend upon the number of dependants.

K-2263. *Mr. Joshi* : You state that your Union was established in 1921. You also state that the railway administration did not recognize the Union until 1928. Do you think if your Union had been recognized in 1921 it would have shown better results ?—Certainly.

K-2264. You state that certain types of quarters are reserved for Europeans and Anglo-Indians ; certain types are reserved for Indian officers, and certain types for Anglo-Indian and European subordinates. Do you mean to say that an Indian and an Anglo-Indian or European of the same rank are provided with different types of houses ?—That is the practice. We say that the same type of houses should be provided for all people of the same status.

K-2265. The Railway Board have told us that they do not make any racial discrimination as regards housing accommodation ?—There is a racial discrimination made as regards housing accommodation.

K-2266. Will you be able to show to the Commission certain houses, having different superficial areas and different kinds of accommodation, which are occupied by Indians and Europeans respectively, holding the same rank ?—I will give details and particulars of the houses, and the numbers, and the districts.

K-2267. You state that the G. I. P. Railway officers use their influence in canvassing votes for the particular men they want to see elected on to the managing committees of these societies. Can you give instances ?—Yes. I can produce statements from members to the effect that they were influenced by the officers to give their votes for the particular persons which the officers wished to see elected. I have personally made a complaint in this matter to the Agent, but I was told that it was outside the scope of the Union.



K-2268. You state that the Mutual Benefit Society is not registered, although for a long time the railway administration has made the membership compulsory. How could they make it compulsory ?—Because that is one of the rules of the service agreement.

K-2269. What is the objection to registering the Society ?—I do not know. In spite of the fact that some of the members have raised this point in the executive committee of the Society, the Society has not been registered.

K-2270. Do you mean to say that the members have no control ?—The members have no real control over the management.

K-2271. *Mr. Cliff* : Will you make enquiries to see if there are any papers showing that representations have been made for a ballot of the members to be taken ?—Yes.

K-2272. *Mr. Joshi* : One or two questions about racial discrimination. We were told by the Railway Board that they make no racial discrimination but that promotion goes according to merit ?—It does not. The posts of Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters, Grade A, are meant entirely for Europeans and Anglo-Indians. There is not a single Indian in the grade of Assistant Station Master, for which the pay is Rs. 365—395 ; the A grade Assistant Station Masters, who are all Europeans and Anglo-Indians, get Rs. 300—345. Whereas an Indian Station Master, B Grade, gets Rs. 210—225, and an Assistant Station Master, B Grade, gets Rs. 170—200.

K-2273. If it is true, as the Railway Board state, that promotion goes according to merit, then there is no Indian out of the 300 million Indians in this country who is fit to be an Assistant Station Master, A Grade ?—That is not correct. There are Indians who are quite as efficient, if not more efficient, to do the work of a Station Master or Assistant Station Master, or Guards, of the A Grade.

K-2274. You think that what the Railway Board have done is to abolish racial discrimination in name, but that they are now trying to discredit the whole Indian race by saying that Indians are not fit for A Grade Station Masters ?—Yes.

K-2275. *The Chairman* : Do you say that promotion to A and B Grades is not open to Indians ?—It is not open to Indians. I say that on the ground that there is no Station Master or Assistant Station Master, A Grade, who is an Indian.

*The Chairman* : That is different from saying that there is a bar.

K-2276. *Mr. Joshi* : Is there a legal bar ?—Whatever may be his merits, and whatever may be his service, and however efficient he may be, an Indian has never been promoted up to now to the grade of Station Master or Assistant Station Master, Grade A.

K-2277. *The Chairman* : You say “ up to now.” We have been told quite specifically that while there was what is called racial discrimination some time ago, a change has been made within the last few years and now promotion is entirely by merit ?—No such circular has been issued up to now. If a change had been made within the last few years then there

would have been at least some such appointments in the A Grade given to Indians.

K-2278. Do you tell the Commission that no Indian has ever been appointed Assistant Station Master ?—Assistant Station Master of the A Grade ; none have been appointed.

K-2279. *Mr. Joshi* : Have you any instances of Europeans appointed to C Grade Station Masters ?—There are very few. Immediately after their appointment they are promoted to the B Grade.

K-2280. Do you admit that no Indian is fit to be a A Grade Station Master ?—On the contrary I say there are many.

K-2281. If the Railway Board make such a statement you consider it is not accurate ?—Quite so.

K-2282. What about the appointment of Europeans and Anglo-Indians to the posts of A and B Grade Guards ?—The same thing happens in the case of Guards, Drivers, Train and Yard Controllers, Deputy Controllers and Ticket Collectors of the A Grade.

K-2283. Among the Ticket Collectors there are some who get Rs. 60 to Rs. 90, and some who get Rs. 30 to Rs. 50. Those who get Rs. 60 to Rs. 90 are Europeans ?—Yes.

K-2284. Are Europeans appointed as Ticket Collectors on Rs. 30 ?—No. They are always appointed on Rs. 60.

K-2285. Do you say there is any racial discrimination as regards medical relief on the railways ?—There is. In the first place, when a European or Anglo-Indian is examined by the medical officer and a prescription is given, the paper used for writing the prescription is different. A white paper is used for Europeans and Anglo-Indians and a brown paper is used for Indians.

K-2286. Do you say that system exists now ?—Yes.

K-2287. When I brought this matter to the notice of the Agent, G. I. P. Railway, some years ago he told me it was only an accident ?—It still continues. Also senior medical officers examine European and Anglo-Indian railway servants, and junior medical officers examine Indian railway servants. Again in the hospitals separate wards are provided for Europeans and Anglo-Indians, and for Indians.

K-2288. *Colonel Russell* : Do Indians not prefer to be in wards of their own ?—They might do, but they certainly would not complain if they were put in the other wards.

K-2289. *The Chairman* : You are not an advocate of Indianization evidently ; you are in favour of Europeanization ?—What I say is that they should be treated alike.

K-2290. *Mr. Joshi* : Would the Indian employees object to being treated by senior medical officers ?—Certainly not.

K-2291. Is there any racial discrimination as regards leave ?—Employees appointed before 1925 were treated differently on the racial basis.

K-2292. And the treatment still continues ?—The treatment of those officers still continues on those lines, but since 1925 the Fundamental Rules have been made applicable to all employees appointed after that date.

Therefore there is no racial discrimination in the matter of leave according to the rules as they stand, but I am not aware of what is being done in practice.

K-2293. One of the demands of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation was that there should be greater security of service. Can you give instances of people who have been discharged without sufficient reason?—I can give many instances. One reason generally advanced is medical examination. There are other instances of men being discharged for making one small mistake.

K-2294. Will you be able to give a list of discharges which will prove clearly that in the administration of the G. I. P. Railway people are discharged without sufficient reason?—Yes, I will do so.

K-2295. Does it happen on the G. I. P. Railway that the officials treat subordinates discourteously?—Yes. We have complained to the Agent about this matter. In some cases we have obtained satisfaction and in many cases we have not.

K-2296. Will you give us a list of such cases?—Yes.

K-2297. With regard to the attitude of the Agent, G. I. P. Railway towards the main grievances of the work-people, in your experience, is the Agent amenable to negotiation or will he not remove a grievance unless you threaten a strike?—He will not be amenable to redress a grievance unless there is a threat of a strike.

K-2298. What is the policy of your Union generally? Do you prefer negotiation or to threaten a strike?—Certainly we prefer negotiation.

K-2299. *Mr. Clow* : In the letter which you sent to the Bombay Labour Office regarding workmen's compensation, you state that you prefer that the system of payment by a lump sum should continue in ordinary cases. Is it your experience that the lump sum grants received by the dependants, of men who are killed, are wisely spent?—I have some experience of these cases, because I have been taking cases before the Commissioner and I think the lump sums are well spent.

K-2300. They are not simply grasped by money-lenders?—No.

K-2301. *The Chairman* : You have told us about your Union and its policy. You have told us also something about the staff councils established by the G. I. P. Railway Company. Do I take it aright that your Union is prepared to meet the railway authorities in regular co-operation to consider the grievances of the men?—Yes. We shall be prepared, provided the constitution of the staff councils is entirely changed and is made on the lines of the German works councils.

K-2302. Supposing the constitution of the staff councils within the Company was formed with the co-operation of the trade union, would you not think in that case that they would be a valuable link?—I think so, provided there are no limitations placed on the discussion of questions which involve financial considerations, and provided also that ordinarily, unless there are very cogent reasons for not accepting them, their decisions are accepted by the administration and by Government.

K-2303. Are you aware that in other countries where there is a recognized relationship between the function of a trade union and the function of a works council, there is a limitation in effect on the kind of things

which the works council deals with. It does not deal with the larger questions of policy which are retained in the hands of the trade union. Would you be prepared yourself to co-operate in establishing a system of that kind ?—I would, and our members would also be willing, and we should co-operate with the administration in the working of such councils.

K-2304. Do you think that would free the trade union from a number of minor points which at present must occupy an immense amount of their time and lead to these extraordinarily large schedules which from time to time are put before the Agent of the Company ?—It would be so. They would be of great use in solving many questions.

K-2305. My other question is with regard to the relationship of your Union to the All-India Railwaymen's Federation ?—We are affiliated to the All-India Railwaymen's Federation. Our Union itself is a federation. The Staff Union itself is a federation of different branch unions and of people working at different centres. At present we have got 10 such branch unions. The Federation itself is registered under the Trade Union Act, and some of the branches also are separately registered.

K-2306. Therefore you represent what is really a federation of smaller unions on this particular Railway, and then you in your turn are affiliated to the All-India Railwaymen's Federation ?—That is so.

K-2307. *Mr. Cliff* : You have put in, as the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, a large number of demands to the Railway Board. I wanted to know whether you, as parties to that Federation, would be prepared to sit down with the Railway Board to try and reach an agreement ?—Certainly, we are prepared to do that.

K-2308. Assume that opportunity was open to you. There is even then room for disagreement. In that event would you be prepared, in conjunction with the Railway Board, to submit the difference to some outside tribunal ?—Yes.

K-2309. Has your Union considered the question of the reduction of the periods of wage payment ?—My Union has not particularly considered that point, but my personal view is that the time should be reduced.

K-2310. What would you say should be the period at which wages should be paid ?—Fortnightly.

K-2311. You have been good enough to supply us with a copy of Appendix C. I see that it not only gives the reply of the Agent but it makes some pungent comments. Who is responsible for this editorial ?—My friend Mr. Bakhle.

K-2312. In your opinion do you think comments of this character do a disservice to the Union ?—(*Mr. Bakhle*) : Having regard to the attitude of the officers. I do not think it will do any disservice. This is only propaganda. (*Mr. Joshi*) : It has been our experience that threats given by the other unions to strike have brought about something. Therefore, although we are not in favour of strikes, when we have failed by all other means it has become also necessary for us to threaten. It is against our wishes to take recourse to extreme steps.

K-2313. In the same document in the first column in the reply it says : " Resolution 3 (1) (c) ", and the comment on that says that " no reply received from the Agent ", etc. Is it possible to give the Commission the reply dealing with this ?—Yes.

K-2314. You state that you have on record definite cases of victimization. Can we have copies of those cases ?—Yes.

K-2315. *Colonel Gidney* : In reply to Mr. Joshi you drew the inference that there were certain grades of appointments practically closed to Indians, simply because there were no Indians in those appointments. How long have you had connection with railway matters ?—For the last eight years.

K-2316. When you started your connection with railway matters was there much desire for Indians to enter railway service ?—There was.

K-2317. How long before you started your connection with railway matters do you think that desire existed ?—It has been the desire of Indians for a very long time.

K-2318. Would you agree with me that there are better educated Indians in the railways to-day than there were before ? Will you agree with me that twenty years ago the Indian Driver could scarcely write his name ?—I do not agree with that.

K-2319. Have you any railway memory or experience of twenty years ago ?—I know the circumstances from people who were in the service. We have members who have retired from the service and who were holding high posts.

K-2320. Twenty years ago the pay on railways was very small. On the G. I. P. Railway, it was after the Manmad Agreement in 1920 that extra pay was given that made it attractive to Indians ?—Yes.

K-2321. Would I be right in saying that there was a great desire on the part of Indians to join the Railway after the Manmad Agreement ?—Not at all. There has been a desire from the very beginning.

K-2322. How long does it take a Ticket Collector to go through all the grades until he becomes an A grade guard ?—It all depends upon the influence he has got with the administration.

K-2323. Supposing he is an ordinary intelligent man ?—It may take him about five years.

K-2324. Do you know any Indian who has done that ?—No. Indians do not get those appointments at all.

K-2325. Would you be surprised if I told you that I know of an Indian of five years' service who is now acting as an Assistant Traffic Superintendent and has reached that position from that of an office clerk ?—I am speaking only of those posts which are specially reserved for Europeans and Anglo-Indians, Grades A and B.

K-2326. Do you agree with me that in order to become a Station Master of a big station one must have had about 20 to 25 years' service ?—Yes, but in the case of A grade Europeans and Anglo-Indians, they become A grade Station Masters within a very short time.

K-2327. What do you mean by " a very short time " ?—Five or ten years.

K-2328. Can you give any cases to the Commission of any Anglo-Indian Ticket Collectors who have become A grade Station Masters in five years ?—I will try to.

(The witnesses withdrew).

## (RAILWAYS)

## Twenty-fifth Meeting

BOMBAY

Tuesday, 26th November, 1929.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon'ble J. H. WHITLEY (*Chairman*).

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, Kt.,  
K.C.S.I., C.I.E.Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt.,  
C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

Diwan CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,

I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).Mr. HOOSEINBHOY A. LALLJI,  
M.L.C.

Mr. R. S. ASAVLE, M.L.C.

Lt.-Col. H. A. J. GIDNEY, M.L.A.

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E.

Mr. DALVI, Secretary, Bombay,  
Baroda and Central India Rail-  
way Employees' Union, Bombay.*Assistant Commissioners*

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

*Joint Secretaries.*

Sir ERNEST JACKSON, Kt., C.I.E., Agent, Mr. H. P. BALL, General Traffic Manager, Mr. J. A. JONES, Chief Engineer, Mr. J. J. C. PATERSON, Loco. and Carriage Superintendent, Dr. SCORESBY JACKSON, Chief Medical Officer. Mr. G. H. KENNEDY, Secretary to Agent, Mr. J. D. ANTIA, Auditor and Chairman, Co-operative Credit Society, and Col. H. F. HOBBS, Staff Officer, of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway Company, Ltd.

K 2329. *The Chairman* : We have been given to us a paper showing in some detail the work of the Co-operative Credit Society on this Railway. As regards the amount of bad debts we are given the details from 1924-25 to 1928-29, showing a remarkably small amount of the total of bad debts. We are also given an interesting table showing how workmen have been relieved, as I understand, of all their liabilities to the

money-lender, the debt being taken over by the Co-operative Credit Society and paid off by instalments. In column 6 is shown the percentage reduction on claims. Do I understand that the process is that if a workman wishes to be freed entirely from the claims of the money-lenders he asks the Staff Officer to act for him in negotiations with the money-lenders, and that these percentages show the amount of reduction in the outstanding claims which has been brought about by the mediation of the Staff Officer ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : That is correct.

K-2330. And it shows that the actual claims of the money-lender by that process has been reduced by amounts ranging 10, 20, 30, 40 and in one case 60 per cent. of the amount claimed by the money-lenders ?—That is so.

K-2331. That gives a most interesting picture of the possibilities of well-managed co-operative credit societies. Is it the institution of the Staff Officer that has made it possible to carry out this work so effectively ?—Yes ; that is so. The Staff Officer was appointed in March last, and since then we have been able to develop our work in different ways. Had I not this Staff Officer to assist me I am quite certain that we should not have been able to go as far as we have done at present. I hope in this direction to go further, and to that end within the last six weeks or two months I have appointed an assistant to the Staff Officer, Mr. Ganu, and we propose to go still further, and we are now on the look out for two or three more assistants for appointments similar to Mr. Ganu's who will go over the line. It is a line of about 4,000 miles and the Staff Officer must be in Bombay helping me in dealing with the union. Mr. Ganu and his assistants can extend this work by going all over the line. It is my intention to have one assistant staff officer for each district on the Railway.

K-2332. What do you mean exactly by a district ?—The railway is divided into different districts, and each of these districts has a headquarters station like Ahmedabad which you passed through. Ahmedabad is the headquarters of one district, and altogether on the line, on the broad gauge and metre gauge, I think, we have ten or eleven districts with a big central station, and at each of these stations we have district officers, the traffic district officer, the executive engineer, and the locomotive officer.

K-2333. With regard to the statement showing the amount of loans and their disbursements, giving the names and description of the workmen, can we take it that these workmen are completely free of money-lenders' debts ?—Yes ; that is so.

K-2334. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : How is that known ?—(*Colonel Hobbs*) : The investigator starts off by interviewing the man himself and obtains from him what we believe to be usually a completely accurate statement of his liabilities. He then proceeds to the money-lender or money-lenders concerned—in fact all creditors—and has a chat with them all. Being a person of knowledge in these matters, he knows the sort of books to ask for particularly in respect of the *sowkars*. He satisfies himself then that he has obtained from these different creditors a complete list of their loans. That being agreed to, he then either deals with those money-lenders or *banias* individually or collectively. At the time of settlement and liquidation he gathers in all promissory notes or bonds, papers or documents

which have been signed as well as any articles of jewelry. Jewelry is very often deposited as part security. That is the method of procedure ; we take a complete receipt and the return of all the man's papers. Those papers are then brought back to me and filed. If there is any balance over and above the actual settlement, that balance of the loan taken from the co-operative society is not returned to the man ; the man does not handle this money at all. It is then returned to the society and placed to his credit as part payment against the loan.

K-2335. *Sir Alexander Murray* : We have got interesting figures as regards increase in wages in other Indian railways, pre-war, post-war and present wages. Could you give us the corresponding figures for your railway in the various departments ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : You would like to know the extent to which wages have been raised ?

K-2336. Wages in 1929 as compared with 1914 and 1919-20.—After the war started a general war allowance was given. In 1919 that allowance was consolidated and brought into the pay. After 1919 certain increases have also been given. So that taking the wages of to-day (1929) and the wages of 1913 or 1914, so far as our workmen in the shops are concerned, we have worked out the figures—in fact we gave these figures to the Union—and the percentage of increase of the average rate of 1929 over 1913 is 117 per cent.

K-2337. Is that as regards the shops ?—Yes, that is the workshops at Parel in Bombay.

K-2338. Are you dealing solely with rates or with earnings ?—*Earnings*.

K-2339. You have given us for the workshops 117 per cent.—That is compared to 1913. Certain increases were given towards the end of 1913. Compared with 1914 after the wages had been raised a little, the percentage increase is 76 per cent.

K-2340. What about the line staff ?—So far as the lower paid staff is concerned, I have taken as example the gangmen who represent the largest number of the lower paid staff on the lines and the increase in 1929 over 1914 comes to just about 60 per cent. The increase in the index figure of the cost of living prepared by the Government comparing 1929 with 1914 is 45 per cent.

K-2341. I notice that you have been doing a good deal in connection with welfare work especially through your Staff Officer. You have given us statistics showing what you have done ; and we have also an interesting brochure prepared by your Welfare and Labour Adviser, Mr. Ganu. I see that from your side of it you have been doing good welfare work. You have a Staff Officer, an Investigator and other officers. But notwithstanding all that, unless you get into closer touch with the workers, unless you get some organization of the workers, it is still possible that the workers will be discontented and you may have strikes. Can you suggest anything that may be done on the workers' side that may correspond with what you are doing on your side, so as to bridge over that blank that I see just now ?—I will only say that the staff has been working with us.

K-2342. My experience is that workers generally are suspicious of movements coming from the employers' side, and I was wondering whether



you could visualize trade unions coming from the workers' side, something that would be effective from their side, that would let the men have confidence in their leaders who can come and negotiate with you regarding their wages and other questions that may crop up between you ?—I am entirely in agreement with you if the trade unions will come in and work to that extent. I entirely agree with you, and I do work to that end. I think I may give proof of that. When we had trouble with the gangmen and we were talking things over with the union in my office about wages and pay and things of that sort, it then came out that the gangmen had to give away 25 to 40 per cent. of their wages to the money-lenders in payment of their debt. I then pointed that out to the union and invited their co-operation. I said "Here is a ready means of immediately increasing the gangmen's pay by relieving them of the heavy interest." I invited them to help me and I told them that they could do more in that respect by talking to the men and telling them how they could get rid of their debts. It was really that meeting which started us on this campaign of trying to relieve the gangmen of their debts.

K-2343. I appreciate very much the work that has been done on your side on the railways. One of the complaints that we have had in all places is about the insecurity of tenure. I am referring to the trouble over dismissals, discharges, and right of appeal. Could you devise some *method* whereby workers could get unions or some bodies of that nature on their side to frame the appeal and put it up to you ?—My experience is that when a man is dismissed or discharged, there is a reluctance on the part of the employers to revise their decision. Could you not have unions or similar bodies representing the workers, so that in putting up cases regarding dismissals and discharges, which are the main troubles that are caused, these appeals would be enquired into before they came to you for final dealing ?—The machinery which you are proposing seems to me to exist already. When certain punishments as fine or whatever that may be is given by the district officer, there is a regular channel for appeal.

K-2344. That is to a superior officer ?—Right through to the Agent. For instance, if I am satisfied that the action taken by the district officer is wrong, I reverse his decision. When the employee has a grievance and wishes to take it to the union, that may come up again to me through the union, and I will go through it again ; if the secretary of the union, or whoever he may be, wishes to come and talk the case over, as they very often do, with the Staff Officer, he will explain to the Secretary. the points of view from the railway side of the case. This has happened not once but very often. The unions and the employees thus get to know the railway side of the question.

K-2345. My point is, before it comes up to you in the first instance, is it not possible to see that the appeal would be more or less vetted by the union ?—(*Colonel Hobbs*) : There is already a system of that kind employed. In respect of a case of this kind, that is to say grievances. cases of dismissal or fine or anything of that kind, not necessarily coming direct to the Agent, they have access to the heads of departments through their unions ; these unions meet the heads of departments regularly. That is already in force now. There are cases now, and perhaps not a few, where through that intervention redress has been given. That system of direct meetings between the union officials and heads of departments is now being freely employed.

K-2346. I may take it then that in cases of dismissals and discharges, you are prepared to discuss individual cases with the unions before the appeal is made to the final court of appeal ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : Oh, yes ; that is being done now.

K-2347. *Mr. Ahmed* : We often have complaints that for petty offences, in accordance with a clause in the terms of agreement, men are discharged from service, they being given only a few days' notice. Have you a clause in the agreement by which men can be discharged after giving them a month's notice ?—Yes.

K-2348. For petty offences, men are discharged from service ?—I can say that no employee of our railway is discharged for a petty offence.

K-2349. *The Chairman* : That is why you wish to retain the power of fining, so that you can give a smaller punishment and avoid discharges ?—Yes.

K-2350. *Mr. Ahmed* : Clause 2 of the terms of agreement runs thus : " That I am liable to be summarily dismissed for misconduct, and that in the event of my services being dispensed with for other reasons, I am liable to one month's notice of discharge, or my service may be terminated without notice on payment of one month's salary." Are you prepared to expunge that clause from the agreement ?—No. I am not prepared to dispense with that. There is nothing unreasonable about it. The same clause applies to me or to any one else. I am liable to be summarily dismissed by my Board. There is nothing unreasonable about that paragraph.

K-2351. Do you know that there is no such clause in any other service under Government ?—I am not aware of that.

K-2352. Such condition of service is not applicable to any other department of the Government of India ; why do you make such a condition in your department ?—(*Mr. Ball*) : I think the Railway Board has answered this question at Delhi. It is chiefly in connection with discipline. We are concerned with the safety of the public and we keep up a fairly high standard of discipline ; we must discharge men who are insubordinate and who consistently do bad work. It applies throughout India.

K-2353. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is there not a similar clause in the agreement of all European officers brought from home to commercial firms, banks, etc., in India ; I mean dismissal for misconduct ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : Yes.

K-2354. *Mr. Ahmed* : How many suits for damages have been brought by European officers in this country for illegal dismissal of that kind ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : None.

K-2355. Are European officers dismissed for offences which can be met by a mere fine ?—It depends upon the crime committed by the officer. We have cases of officers being given three months' pay in lieu of notice on discharge in accordance with their agreement.

K-2356. Why do you have three months' notice in the case of covenanted officers and one month's notice in the case of the other servants ?—An officer who comes out from England under a covenant is entitled to three months' notice or three months' pay in lieu of notice, but an officer engaged in India is liable to discharge under a month's notice.

K-2357. In view of the fact that men are discharged for slight offences, would you expunge that clause from the agreement form ?—No man is dismissed for a slight offence.

K-2358. *Mr. Cliff* : You gave Sir Alexander Murray certain figures as regards increase in wages. You referred to an increase that was given in 1919 ; was that the first war allowance given ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : No. The actual war allowance, which was a special allowance, was given during the year 1916.

K-2359. What was the amount ?—It varied according to pay. For example, a man whose pay was Rs. 20 received as war allowance an additional Rs. 3. In 1919, as these various allowances caused difficulty and complication, a man had his pay and his additional allowance and other allowances, and it was then decided to amalgamate all his allowances and say " That is your pay ". When that amalgamation took place, the consolidated pay of the man was somewhere about what he got with his allowances, and to even it off it was sometimes a little more. If you care to see, we have here a statement of the allowances which were given.

K-2360. I should be glad to see that. Has there been any increase since the wages were consolidated ?—Yes ; not what I would call a general increase all over the line, but there have been increases here and there. For instance, an increase was given this year to gangmen from the 1st January.

K-2361. Is it true to say that speaking generally the consolidated rate is the rate obtaining in 1929 ?—No ; they are higher now. In our note we have compared the rates of pay in 1929 with the rates in 1922-23. That shows an increase in most cases over and above what we gave in 1919.

K-2362. I want to be clear. You gave Sir Alexander Murray certain figures of increase. Were those percentages of increase over and above the consolidated wage ?—The percentage rates which I gave Sir Alexander Murray compared the rates of pay to-day with the rates of pay in 1913 or 1914. It takes into account the increase which we gave under the scheme of 1919 *plus* any subsequent increase which may have been given.

K-2363. Is there any difficulty in giving us the percentage increase between the time it was consolidated and 1929 ?—No ; we can work that out for you.

K-2364. In your memorandum, you have dealt with the " Relations of the Railway Trade Union " Does that spell out the attitude of your company towards the railway trade union ?—Yes ; that certainly represents our policy towards the union.

K-2365. *The Chairman* : I understand that you are willing to hear representations of unions concerning individual cases ?—Yes. But we reserve the right not to do so. I think I may say that we generally do it.

K-2366. *Mr. Cliff* : I am afraid that the paragraph still remains. Are you prepared to build up the various councils enumerated in your memorandum, in consultation with the unions ?—I am prepared to consult the unions at any time and do anything which will establish cordial relations between the unions and ourselves to the welfare and benefit of the

staff. I can say that it has been my policy ever since these unions were started. Since we recognized them in 1926 we realized that a new state of things has come about. I think we all of us realized that it was for us to establish cordial relations with them and get along as best we could. We have done our best, but at the same time I wish to say that it has not been possible to agree and accept every suggestion which they have made.

K-2367. I do not suppose the union anticipated that. Otherwise they would feel that they have got a paradise or something equivalent to that. But this is more important. Would you be prepared to agree that the staff councils should be built up in conjunction with the unions ?—I should like to think over that. At the same time I might say this ? I see no reason why our staff committees and our unions cannot both try to carry on together. They are, both of them, for the welfare of the staff, and because the one exists, I cannot see and I have never seen any reason, why, the other should not exist at the same time.

K-2368. *The Chairman* : Quite true. But that is an important point raised by Mr. Cliff, that there should be no suspicion that the one is antagonistic or alternative to the other. I think you do not yourself take that view. You take the view that there is a place for both ?—Certainly.

K-2369. And you see no objection to constitute your staff councils in agreement with the unions so as to remove the possibility of that suspicion ?—No. I do not see any objection to that. It could be done. But it would be rather difficult to do it. May I quote an example ? It is difficult enough now having to deal with two or three trade unions which we have. These trade unions do not pull together. My difficulty in dealing with these 75,000 or 80,000 staff is that while I am anxious to help these unions, I never know where I am. The trade unions are both competing for the same class of staff. It was stated in Ajmer by a witness who was not a railway witness that the union at Ajmer represented the only union there. That is not so. Our Bombay union here looks after the workshop staff, the line staff and the traffic staff. It has an office at Ajmer and is trying to get hold of the Ajmer workshop staff. In fact it is everywhere.

K-2370. *The Chairman* : I think we quite recognize your difficulties with these competing unions covering the same ground. What Mr. Cliff wants to get at is merely the principle.—I believe in the principle of staff committees working in with the unions and the unions working in with the staff committees. On the Bengal Nagpur Railway, I think they have a representative or two or three representatives of the unions on their staff committees. Mr. Ball tells me that the same facilities are given to our traffic staff committees. He has told his staff committee that there is no objection at all if an officer of the union who is elected likes to be a member of the staff committee, it is all to the good to have him there.

K-2371. It is more radical than that. It is not enough if you tell the staff committee that they may have one or two representatives of the unions on the staff committee. It is true you have difficulties. But your memorandum records that these two unions were formed in 1920 and were not recognized until 1928 ?—1926.

K-2372. It is not a case of going back on the past. It is a case of seeing whether there can be co-operation in establishing the machinery. Are you prepared to agree that when the machinery is established it shall

be established in agreement with the union ?—If the representatives of the union on the staff committees are our own employees, yes. But I would not like to have outside people on our staff committees.

K-2373. Is it possible that in conjunction with the staff councils or in addition to the staff councils, there could be a permanent standing machinery between the unions and the railway administration, in order that that joint conference might address itself to the problems confronting you and the unions on the railways ?—I see no objection to that.

K-2374. May I take it that you will address yourself to that problem ?—Certainly, I will try and see if we could bring about one joint machinery which shall represent the line instead of having these different parties which are now in one direction and then in the other direction.

K-2375. With regard to the question of increasing the rates of wages, I understand you are limited in the amount that you may spend without the sanction of the Railway Board to Rs. 25,000 a year in respect of a particular grade of staff ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : Yes.

K-2376. Now take a particular class, cabinmen. Suppose the Agent wanted to increase the standard rate of wages of the cabinmen. What increase could he give with Rs. 25,000 a year ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : That depends on the number of cabinmen.

K-2377. I agree it does. That is why I am asking you what increase you could give for each cabinman ?—If we gave a general increase to all the cabinmen as a class and if that amounted to more than Rs. 25,000 a the cabinmen. Would you have to go to the Railway Board for sanction ?—

K-2378. Suppose you gave a general increase of Rs. 6 per annum to the cabinmen. Would you have to go to the Railway Board for sanction ?—Not, if we gave Rs. 6 for an individual cabinman. But if we gave Rs. 6 to the grade of cabinmen and if it amounted to more than Rs. 25,000 per annum we would have to go to the Railway Board for sanction.

K-2379. Would that amount to so much ?—Not, I believe, in our case. (*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : I went to the Railway Board with regard to the increase to gangmen.

K-2380. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : We were told at Delhi that the Railway Board could not interfere with the service conditions under company-managed railways. Your railway is a company-managed railway ?—Yes.

K-2381. In the introduction to your memorandum it is stated : " At the end of 1905 the Secretary of State under the contracts then subsisting, purchased the property vesting in the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway Company by paying a fixed price." Do I take it that the money invested in this concern now belongs to the Government of India ?—No, the Company has a share capital of £2,000,000.

K-2382. *The Chairman* : The share capital of the Company has not yet been liquidated ?—No.

K-2383. But it is in process of being liquidated in certain periods ?—It will be liquidated when our contract with the Secretary of State falls in in 1941.

K-2384. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Take the memorandum submitted by Mr. Ganu. Is he an employee of the B. B. & C. I. Railway ?—Yes. He gets a consolidated honorarium.

K-2385. Do you disclaim all responsibility for the memorandum submitted by him ?—Yes. When I say, I disclaim all responsibility I mean that he did the whole thing by himself.

K-2386. In that case I do not want to ask any questions on that. Mr. Cliff put you some questions with regard to relations of the Railway trade unions and you stated that you, the Agent, deal ultimately with the grievances that are brought before the management. Has the Agent any time to deal with the grievances of the staff ?—Yes, I hope he has. Of course the bulk of it is thrown on my Staff Officer. Before he was appointed I and my Secretary did it, but neither he nor I had time. I will not say that I see every letter which comes in. But if there is any question about the settlement of things, Colonel Hobbs will immediately come and see me.

K-2387. Would you agree with me that the suggestion made by Mr. Cliff being a reasonable one which you have accepted as being reasonable, it would be better to work on that system rather than on the present system on which you are working ?—Yes, I agree with it, provided it is possible.

K-2388. With regard to “ methods of fixing wages ” and extent of “ standardization ” you say that you fix your wages according to the living expense of your workers. What is the lowest wage that you pay your workers ?—I could not say.

K-2389. Would that be Rs. 9 a month ?—(*Colonel Hobbs*) : There may in certain up-country stations be certain types of men, a very few, who are still on a wage of Rs. 10 or 11 a month. In these cases there are certain conditions entailed. Otherwise the lowest paid staff on this line as a body are the gangmen. That is on the open line. Their pay ranges from Rs. 13-8-0 up-country in the cheapest districts to Rs. 26 in Bombay. But there are also various concessions which increase the amount.

K-2390. In your memorandum you give an Appendix showing the rates of wages and what you intend to do in regard to their revision. I notice that there are hundreds and thousands of workers who are getting between Rs. 12 and Rs. 20 a month.—Certainly.

K-2391. There are coolies, strikers, *Khalasis* and watermen who are started on Rs. 12 a month ?—Yes.

K-2392. Do you consider that that is a living wage to pay your workers ?—That depends entirely on the circumstances under which they are living and working. It is my belief that the staff of this railway are in practically every case receiving a living wage.

K-2393. But is Rs. 12 a month a living wage ?—On its own merits, possibly not.

K-2394. It is not ?—Possibly not.

K-2395. Therefore the statement that you are giving these wages according to the living expense is not correct ?—Rs. 12 need not necessarily be all that they earn.

K-2396. But what is it that you pay ? I do not want to take hypothetical considerations into account ?—There are cases existing now where a man is only putting in part of his time for the pay he draws. It is a very big question that you are putting now when you ask for the absolute minimum wage.

K-2397. But is he not a full-time employee of the railway ?—Not necessarily. Take for instance sweepers at up-country stations. They are not necessarily full-time men at all. They have perquisites outside the railway station which are permitted.

K-2398. Do *Khalasis*, coolies, strikers, cleaners and coalmen have outside work, or are they full-time employees ?—They do not.

K-2399. I take it they are on Rs. 12 a month ?—No, they are not on Rs. 12 a month.

K-2400. Their starting pay is Rs. 12 a month ?—It may have been in regard to the staff you have mentioned. But there is a proposal now before the Home Board to increase their pay.

K-2401. I am not asking what proposal there is before the Home Board. I am asking what is the present state of affairs. Would you agree that what you are paying them now is not a living wage ?—I do not agree.

K-2402. You do not agree and you consider that it is a living wage ?—It depends entirely on the circumstances under which the man is living.

K-2403. Suppose a man is living at Ajmer and is a striker on your railway on Rs. 12 a month. I put it to you whether you consider that as a living wage ?—I am not prepared to answer that as a specific question.

K-2404. Then I will leave that. But has your Company ever made any enquiries to find out what the actual living wage of the worker is ?—Yes, it has.

K-2405. Would you let us have a note on that point ?—I could. I can cite it now.

K-2406. No, it would save a great deal of time if you could send in a note of your investigations in this matter ?—Yes, I have before me at the present moment what I consider to be an average domestic budget taken over this part of the Bombay district.

K-2407. That will be very useful ?—On that we have a comparative table of the cost of a man's living and his present wage.

K-2408. *The Chairman* : Is that prepared by you ?—Yes.

K-2409. *Col. Russell* : In your memorandum you say that the high incidence of sickness is a great obstacle to the contentment and efficiency of your workers. Have you ever made any investigations as to the causes of this high incidence of sickness ?—(*Dr. Scoresby Jackson*) : It seems to me that so much sickness amongst the railway employees is due to the fact that they have not sufficient means to feed themselves in order to recuperate after an illness. They get a certain salary. If they get ill, they are unable to buy sufficient food to recuperate. They go on remaining sick. They resume duty, but they are not fit yet, and they go back sick again.

K-2410. Dealing with health you say in your memorandum that the standard of health of railway employees is not high due to various causes. I tried to get some information on this point both at Delhi and Ajmer, but I was not successful. You say that the low standard of health is "possibly due to a large number of them not being properly nourished."—Yes, I have just said that they are unable to recuperate after illness owing to insufficient nourishment.

K-2411. But is not their general standard of nourishment very low?—The general standard of nourishment is low.

K-2412. The second cause is given to be "general overcrowding in dwellings." Do you admit that the dwellings of the lowest paid staff are generally overcrowded?—They are very overcrowded.

K-2413. Is that because the Railway has not given them housing accommodation?—The accommodation given to the lowest paid staff is roughly about 100 sq. ft. But some of these people 5 to 9 dependents on them.

K-2414. Has any great provision been made for housing the lower paid staff on the railways?—Only a certain number of them are provided with quarters, not all.

K-2415. What percentage?—(*Mr. Kennedy*): About 58 per cent. of the lower paid staff.

K-2416. Is the overcrowding due to the fact that in addition to the members of the family, the relatives of the workers also stay in those quarters?—(*Dr. Scoresby Jackson*): Yes.

K-2417. Have you considered that it would be for the benefit of the administration if you provided the employees, particularly the lower paid employees with quarters in separate railway colonies?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*): That is a question of policy. Wherever in big towns there are quarters available outside we have not put up quarters. But in stations where there are no quarters available we have built quarters. In Dohad for example, we propose to put up quarters for every man working in the shops. May I add one thing more? So far as the workshop staff at Parel were concerned we were not prepared to build new quarters for them. At the same time we wanted to improve the housing of these workshop men. So we entered into an agreement with the Bombay Government to take over large blocks of Worli chawls. We put in electric lights, playgrounds, stores, dispensary; and in fact everything we could think of. But for some reason or other they were not popular. We were prepared to take any number of blocks to house every man in our shops, but we did not succeed.

K-2418. Dealing with the question of sickness you give an account of so many days of labour lost. I have calculated these out and found that they are 5.4 days lost per employee and 8.4 days lost per sickness certificate. Do you think that these figures give a fair idea of the amount of sickness among railway employees?—(*Dr. Scoresby Jackson*): I do not think they give a fair idea of the amount of sickness, because it is not a fair indication of the very large number of people who go sick without any certificate at all. Vast numbers of gangmen along the line do not get sick certificates when they go sick, and without attending a railway dispensary at any time, they go back when they are fit.



K-2419. If a scheme of sickness insurance came up, you would not be able to give an accurate estimate of the amount of sickness that actually occurs among your employees, because there are many of your employees who go on leave without any sick certificate?—It is not possible to give an accurate estimate.

K-2420. Dealing with prevalence of malaria you say that sometimes a deadlock occurs between the Railway and the Municipalities when neither of them is prepared to take action. Have you any suggestion to make to overcome this difficulty; for example, in the case of closing borrow pits which produce conditions favourable to malaria?—If a Municipality asks us to fill up a borrow pit within railway limits which they allege to be the cause of malaria we are quite willing to fill it up, the expense being borne wholly by the administration. I think there is a rule or instruction from the Railway Board to that effect.

K-2421. Have you any trained midwives on your welfare staff?—All the nurses who are health visitors are trained midwives.

K-2422. I notice that you say that these health visitors undertake maternity cases?—Yes, they are all trained midwives.

K-2423. Complaints have been made in various places about the difficulty of getting medical facilities, especially when the workers live at some distance from the hospitals and cannot attend the hospital when they are sick. Is there any foundation for such complaints?—It is quite possible that people living between stations have difficulty in getting medical facilities. But are you referring to stations or inter-stations only?

K-2424. To stations only?—It stands to reason that we cannot have dispensaries dotted all over the stations and so some people might have to work considerable distances.

K-2425. But are persons who are sick visited by your medical staff at home?—Yes.

K-2426. On payment?—No, the railway employees are entitled to free medical treatment and attendance at their houses.

K-2427. Have you any valid grounds for the non-acceptance, for the purpose of sick leave and the like, of certificates of unattached medical practitioners? That is a general complaint?—There is a complaint that we do not like accepting outside medical certificates. But we have to watch them very carefully.

K-2428. Do you accept any outside certificates?—No, till we enquire into the matter.

K-2429. But you do accept a certain proportion of outside certificates?—Yes.

K-2430. What is the proportion?—I think we accept about 2,500 a year; the number is gradually increasing.

K-2431. Certificates from what class of medical practitioners?—From qualified medical practitioners.

K-2432. Registered under the Act?—Yes.

K-2433. There are also complaints as to the standards of medical tests. The general complaint is that these are too high. In cases where an adverse decision has been given by a medical officer, does the employee in question have any right of appeal?—Yes, he has a right of appeal to me.

K-2434. That is to say, the Chief Medical Officer?—Yes.

K-2435. Can you give us an idea as to what proportion of these appeals you reverse?—I cannot give you figures, but I can say that they are a fair number.

K-2436. Do you classify your tests for visual perception, colour perception and hearing into three classes?—Yes.

K-2437. And Class A, I suppose, is based wholly in the interests of public safety, so that it must be of a particularly high standard?—Yes.

K-2438. *Mr. Hooseinbhoy Lallji* : At present the period of payment of wages in all cases is one month. Have you ever found that the people want wages fortnightly or weekly?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : I never found that, and I very much doubt if they would like it at all.

K-2439. Do you think that if the workmen are paid weekly or fortnightly their indebtedness would be reduced?—No, I do not.

K-2440. The Bombay Municipality has been asking the railways to fill in the ditches near the railway lines to prevent malaria and the railways do not carry that out. Why?—(*Dr. Scoresby Jackson*) : The railways have filled up a vast number of ditches within the area of the Bombay Municipality during the past few years.

K-2441. But they have not filled up all the ditches?—They are filling up by degrees.

K-2442. But do they agree that it is their duty to fill it up?—Yes, in Bombay city.

K-2443. *Colonel Gidney* : Mr. Chairman, with your permission, before I put my questions, I desire to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European employees on the B. B. & C. I. Railway, to thank Sir Ernest Jackson and his administration for their many years of kindness, training and consideration to them, and I feel sure the close relationship between employer and employees for over half a century has resulted in mutual benefit and appreciation. I wish to place that on record. I would like the Chief Medical Officer to tell us what colour tests are applied?—The colour tests used on the B. B. & C. I. Railway are Holmgren's coloured wool tests.

K-2444. Do you realize that that test is antiquated?—Yes.

K-2445. And though it is an antiquated test you still use it?—I think it is sufficient for the railways, though it is an antiquated test.

K-2446. Do you mean to admit by that that a number of cases which you reject as being colour blind are not really cases of colour blindness?—No, I do not say that. As a matter of fact, we make very few people fail for colour vision ; it is a very low percentage.

K-2447 The few cases which you reject may not after all be cases of colour blindness because you are using an antiquated test ?—The man who is examined for colour vision by Holmgren's coloured wool test undergoes a night test and also other tests with flags.

K-2448. Would you consider the advisability of using the Edridge Green lamp colour test ?—I thought over that ten years ago and gave it up.

K-2449. But surely you must know that every hospital in London uses that test ?—There they have more educated people to deal with.

K-2450. You mean a more trained class of medical officers ?—Certainly.

K-2451. Sir Ernest Jackson just now stated that every appeal can be sent to him for adjudication. At Ajmer we were told by the Superintendent of the Carriage and Waggon Department that he did not remember any case where punishment he had inflicted had been reversed by the Agent. Do you, Sir Ernest Jackson, in your capacity as Agent reverse any appeals, and if so is there any record ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : I have not kept a record over a long period, but I have a record for the last six months. In those six months I have had 52 appeals addressed to me—addressed direct by the staff and not through the unions—and of those 52, eight cases were reversed by me.

K-2452. *The Chairman* : That is, roughly 15 per cent ?—Yes.

K-2453. *Cotton! Gidney* : Would I be right if I said that in some cases your junior officers misuse their powers of discharge under the terms of your service agreement and discharge men in cases where they are afraid to dismiss a servant which would necessitate a full enquiry ; in other words, do they misuse their powers and discharge a man instead of giving him the chance of a full enquiry for dismissal ?—I hope they do not.

K-2454. Are you aware that that is a universal complaint on the railways ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : The junior officers have no powers of discharge ; all cases of discharge must come up to the head of the department.

K-2455. I know you are working under the company-managed system and you have no divisional system on the B. B. & C. I. Railway : but your Assistant Loco Officer or your District Loco Officer can discharge a man ?—No, he cannot discharge a man without the sanction of his Loco Superintendent.

K-2456. Does his Loco Superintendent ever disagree with him ?—I cannot say.

K-2457. Sir Ernest Jackson, you just now said that you are prepared to examine individual cases. Are you aware that in doing so you violate the terms of the Trade Unions Act ; that is to say, under the Trade Unions Act a Union is not allowed to take up individual cases ; it can only represent a case if it violates a policy, but, not individual cases ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : I do not know to what provision you are referring.

K-2458. I do not want to press that point, Sir ! In your memorandum you give the reduced scales of pay on the B. B. & C. I. Railway ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : No, we give the revised scales of pay.

K-2459. The revised scales are really the reduced scales. Have you made this reduction for new entrants only ?—Yes.

K-2460. Not for old servants ?—No.

K-2461. You have standardized this reduction in scales on the reduced rate of the cost of living ?—Yes.

K-2462. Have you any figures to show what difference there is between the cost of living to-day and the cost of living in 1918 ?—We have taken the Bombay Labour Office figures.

K-2463. The comparative figures showing the cost of living with pre-war rates are given in the Railway Board's memorandum. I see there is not much difference in the cost of living between 1918 and 1928 ; in 1918 the percentage increase on the pre-war rates was 54 while in 1928 it was 47 ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : You must remember that our last increase in the scales of pay was in 1919 when the percentage increase in the cost of living was 75.

K-2464. Is it because the cost of living has fallen that you have now made a reduction in the scales of wages ?—Yes.

K-2465. Have you suggested any similar reduction in the official grades of pay for the same reason ?—No, because they were not raised at the same rate.

K-2466. In my questions at Ajmer I asked about the promotion of subordinates to official grades. Sir Ernest Jackson, do you subscribe to the policy of Indianization as enunciated by the Government of India ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : Yes, certainly.

K-2467. Do you subscribe to the ordinances issued by the Central Railway Advisory Committee ?—What ordinances do you refer to ?

K-2468. There was one issued in 1926 about the promotion of 20 per cent. of subordinates to official grades ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : We do not subscribe to that, because the conditions of service in the company-managed railways are different from those in the State railways. The State railways have what they call local service officers, but the companies have not. All our officers are on one scale of pay.

K-2469. I know all about that. I am not including the local service officers. What I ask is, have you promoted many subordinates, both Indians and Anglo-Indians to the Official grades ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : During the last five years there were 76 vacancies in all the departments and of these 26 were given to subordinates already in the service.

K-2470. Can you reconcile that statement with your reply to the Railway Board given to the questions asked by me in the Legislative Assembly last March ? Out of the 26 vacancies you filled up, were any of them Anglo-Indians ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : There were 21 Indians and 5 non-Asiatics.

K-2471. May I know what class of people non-Asiatics are ?—That is, people with overseas domicile.

K-2472. Are these people those Anglo-Indians who have managed to squeeze in and claim non-Asiatic domicile and get overseas allowances ?—May be.

K-2473. Would you say generally ?—Not generally.

K-2474. In your letter to the Railway Board already quoted you have stated that no Anglo-Indian has been appointed to the official grade ?—That is not correct. In the Audit Department we appointed one Anglo-Indian in 1927 and one in 1928.

K-2475. But I have your letter with me—read it. It is dated the 18th of July 1929 and you state that out of the five probationers for Assistant Traffic Superintendentships, four are Indians and one is a European ?—You are talking about the traffic department ; I am referring to the Railway as a whole.

K-2476. Let that pass. There is a service agreement on your Railway, Sir Ernest Jackson, which you demand from your employees. There are certain suggestions made in the memorandum submitted to Commission at Ajmer by the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association which the Chairman said we could better deal with in Bombay. In this memorandum certain alterations in the service agreement are suggested. I do not want to refer to clause 2 to which my friend, Mr. Ahmed, drew attention. But, there are certain clauses, particularly clauses 1, 5 and 7 which are distinctly one-sided and are at variance with the terms of agreement on all other railways in India. Are you prepared to consider the acceptance of these suggestions ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : I would not like to reply off-hand, but if you would send me your proposal I would certainly go into the matter.

K-2477. *Mr. Dalvi* : In your memorandum you speak of giving 10 per cent. house allowance. Do you give that to all your employees ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : 10 per cent. allowance is given to all the subordinate employees in Bombay as a house allowance.

K-2478. But you do not give 10 per cent. allowance to the men in the workshop ?—In the case of workshop men the 10 per cent. has been consolidated in their pay.

K-2479. Why do you not adopt the same method of giving 10 per cent. in the case of workshop men ?—We used to give them 10 per cent. as an allowance before 1913, but since then we have found that the present system is better.

K-2480. Do you not think that an allowance of ten per cent. is not sufficient for a resident in Bombay ?—I believe 10 per cent. is laid down not only for Bombay but for all other presidency towns by the Government of India.

K-2481. If a workman wants to make a complaint why do you insist on his representing it through the foreman and not through the representatives of the trade union ?—(*Col. Hobbs*) : I am not quite certain what the meaning of the question is, but if the workshop staff is referred to, I may say that they are represented by the local union at Parel. On several occasions, within recent months, deputations from the loco shops, which included the executive of the union, have been received by the Agent.

K-2482. In your memorandum you say : “Representations and appeals addressed to the Agent must be submitted....through the Head of the Department concerned.” Why should not representations be

sent direct to the Agent ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : If it were sent to the Agent direct he would have to send it back to the Head of the Department concerned for remarks. It is the recognized way, I think, of all appeals.

K-2483. *Mr. Gregory* : During your presidential address at the Simla Conference you made a statement in regard to the indebtedness of the staff. The statement reads as follows : “ On the other hand, I venture the opinion that even if railways gave these men an increase of 50 per cent. or even more in their pay, they would be hardly better off than they are at present, for it would undoubtedly in most cases disappear into the money-lender’s pocket.” May I ask on what you based that statement ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : You want to know whether it was based on my personal observations or was it merely a statement based on hearsay. That statement was based on both. While travelling over the line (for the last two years I have covered practically the whole line by trolley) I have tried to find out for myself what the actual conditions were by talking to the gangmen, station masters and others.

K-2484. When you travel over the line and visit all the various stations, do you give the lower paid staff a chance of speaking to you ; in other words, do you give them free access to you ?—Absolutely ; they come up to me and I talk to them.

K-2485. At Ajmer one of the employees’ representatives mentioned that during certain rushes of traffic you took upon additional staff ; he dealt with the running staff chiefly and he implied that those men were discharged at short notice or were forced to go on compulsory leave when traffic slackened. He referred to many railways but mentioned your railway as being one of them. Can you tell the Commission how you actually deal with this temporary staff ?—(*Mr. Ball*) : As *Mr. Gregory* suggested, in the beginning of the busy season, that is, in October and November, we used to employ chiefly temporary ticket collectors to relieve ticket collectors who were passed guards and who could be employed as guards. The staff committee represented that this entailed a certain amount of hardship on the men because they did not get the advantages of permanent service like provident fund, gratuity and passes and that the temporary service did not count for gratuity. At the request of the staff committee we made a rule that after 18 months’ temporary service every man is to be confirmed.

K-2486. In other words, you take them on to your books as permanent staff ?—Yes after 18 months’ temporary service.

K-2487. The witness of the Workers’ Federation at Ajmer stated that he had written to the Agent for recognition of his union and that he had received no reply. Are you aware of any such applications for recognition of his union ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : No. I had heard that statement made at Ajmer and soon after I returned to Bombay I went through my files again but I could not find a request of that kind made.

K-2488. What would your actual procedure be if you received such an application ?—I should first of all find out whether they were registered. In this case I understand they are. I should then probably ask

my Staff Officer to go to Ajmer to find out all about them ; to see how many members they had on their books; whether those members had -siles eral sijnseal ept II 'tuessardæa læt pīs uoim ept which the staff ept Suittuæsdæa sæquæm jo uoittodæd ept pue 'suottidææssuhs ætæt pæd factory, and the union had been registered, I should certainly recognize them.

K-2489. Certain memoranda at Ajmer referred to the treatment of the lower paid staff in Railway hospitals and dispensaries. It was stated that an employee, when he was admitted into one of the railway hospitals or dispensaries, was put to certain expense. Can you give a general idea of what that expense is ?—So far as I am aware, there are no expenses for actual hospital treatment, nursing and attendance for anybody drawing Rs. 30 and under. These patients pay nothing, even, for their food or diet. It is absolutely free. For any one drawing over Rs. 30 the charge is 12 annas per cent. of their pay per day for their food.

K-2490. The traffic inspecting staff and the station masters appear to have a grievance in that their scales of pay are lower than the scales of pay which are in force in the loco department. What is your opinion about this grievance, and do you consider it well-founded ?—My opinion is that it is not well-founded. But I would like our General Traffic Superintendent and Loco Superintendent to state their views. (Mr. Ball) : It is generally the case that the locomotive staff men, skilled in mechanical engineering, do draw higher scales of pay than the other staff. I consider their responsibilities are very much greater when they are running trains.

K-2491. There appears to be a view prevalent—certainly one witness definitely said it—that the responsibilities of a Driver and Guard are practically equivalent. What is your opinion ?—I think that is absurd. In the first place, the mechanical training of a Driver entitles him to a higher pay than a Guard who has not had the same very heavy training. In the second place, the safety of the train depends more on the driver primarily than on anybody else. The Guard only functions when there is an accident, or when there is something to be done to prevent an accident.

K-2492. There is a Guard and a Driver on the same train. While the train is in motion the Driver is responsible, as the major part of his time is spent in moving ?—Yes.

K-2493. The Guard only functions at stations ?—Yes.

K-2494. Col. Gidney : When there is an accident is not the Guard held equally responsible ?—He has certain responsibilities, but I consider they are less than the Driver's responsibilities.

K-2495. But he is punished all the same ?—Yes.

K-2496. Mr. Gregory : In your memorandum you mention certain schools for the training of probationers. At Ajmer one of the witnesses definitely stated that he was not aware of the existence of a school at Ajmer. Is it correct to say that no school exists at Ajmer ?—Two schools exist at Ajmer—a training school for goods clerks and coaching clerks, run generally by a retired Audit Inspector or station master, and a telegraph training school, run by the Telegraph Superintendent.

K-2497. *The Chairman* : With regard to the application of the Union at Ajmer to be recognized, you tell the Commission that you cannot trace the receipt of any such application. We were assured that a letter had been sent. Will you make enquiries as to whether the letter was mislaid or disappeared ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : I will certainly make enquiries, but I may mention the fact that I was really on the look out for that letter. I received a letter from the Commissioner at Ajmer asking me if I had any objection to the name under which they were to be registered. So that I knew of the formation of the union. For that reason my office would have been on the look out for that letter requesting recognition.

K-2498. It would be a pity if there should have been any mishap or mislaying of the letter. Under the circumstances, as a statement has been made to us, I think it would be useful if you cleared up the matter ?—I will do that.

K-2499. *Mr. Asavle* : Who engage the staff in the Loco and Carriage Departments ?—The head of the department concerned.

K-2500. You mean the Foreman in charge ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : No. The Foreman carries out the test and recommends the engagement or otherwise of the men to the Works Superintendent.

K-2501. Are you aware that commissions are received in connection with the employment of workmen in the locomotive department ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : We have heard so, but we have never been able to get any proof.

K-2502. With regard to daily paid workmen, why are not they made permanent when they work continuously for fifteen or twenty years ?—(*Mr. Paterson*) : A daily paid man is permanent. All workshop staff are daily paid. It does not follow that a man is not permanent because he is daily paid. (*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : It is different with casual labour, where a coolie is taken on for a day or so.

K-2503. Am I to understand that every labourer working in the locomotive, carriage and engineering departments is permanent ?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : Yes.

K-2504. Do they get the same benefits as the other permanent staff get ?—Yes, with certain restrictions. For example a man working in the workshop who gets less than Rs. 15 a month is not allowed to subscribe to the Provident fund. If he gets a daily rate which gives him more than Rs. 15 a month he subscribes to the provident fund like everybody else. He also gets a gratuity when he retires, the same as the other staff do.

K-2505. What sort of assistance is given out of the fines fund to the low paid staff ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : I understand you wish to know the advances which have been made from the fines funds as divided between the Indian staff and the other staff. Is that your question ?

K-2506. Yes ?—In 1928-29 grants were made to the extent of Rs. 48,700. Of that sum Rs. 7,000 odd were given to the European and Anglo-Indian staff ; Rs. 23,000 odd were given to the Indian staff and Rs. 19,000 odd were given for institutes, etc., for the benefit of the joint



staff—European, Angla-Indian and Indian. In 1927-28 the respective figures were Rs. 5,000, Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 17,000.

K-2507. Out of the Foremen and Assistant Foremen appointed to the locomotive, carriage and engineering departments how many Indians are there ?—(*Mr. Paterson*) : The total number of Foremen in the shops is 19—12 Europeans, 6 Anglo-Indians and one Indian. In the outstation depots there are 17 Foremen—2 Europeans, 10 Anglo-Indians and 5 Indians.

K-2508. Is the one Indian Foreman whom you mention a Parsi gentleman ?—Yes.

K-2508a. You say very little overtime is worked. Is it not true to say that every Sunday about three to four hundred people are made to work in the following departments : erecting shop, boiler shop, mechanical shop, fitting tool room, foundary and the millwright shop ?—There are not as many as 400 working, but a certain amount of overtime cannot be avoided because the shops have to be cleaned, the offices washed, and sanitary work done. The millwright shop has to carry out repairs which can only be done when the shops are closed. Taking into account the fact that there are 6,000 men the overtime is very little—rather, I may say, to the disgust of the staff I think.

K-2509. *Miss Power* : Referring to Col. Hobbs' reply to Mr. Chaman Lall, on the subject of the minimum wage and the fact that some minima were not representative seeing that they did not take into account certain concessions, could we have a statement of these concessions and their monetary equivalent as affecting the different grades in different areas ?—(*Col. Hobbs*) : Yes.

K-2510. I understand that the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway are now making a fairly wide enquiry into family budgets ?—Yes.

K-2511. The most experienced body in India connected with the question of budgets is the Bombay Labour Office. Has the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway consulted with that office as to the science involved in collecting information of this kind ?—Two or three years ago there was some collaboration. The form which the Commission has seen this morning is a copy of that adopted by the Bombay Labour Office.

K-2512. Who has collected the information ?—Our investigators.

K-2513. Are they paid full-time for doing so ?—Yes. One of them is Mr. Ganu, who has put in this memorandum which the Commission has received. He has a very wide experience of this matter inasmuch as he has lived among the people as a contractor and in various other capacities throughout his life. He certainly is very efficient.

K-2514. I take it that he is not a scientific investigator ?—No.

K-2515. The Bombay Labour Office has given us a good deal of information as to the precariousness of investigations of this sort unless undertaken by very skilled investigators. They have said that it takes a minimum of six months of concentrated training to make an investigator who will produce information which is sufficiently accurate to be accepted. What

sort of training have your investigators had ?—Mr. Ganu has been engaged on the work for a very long time. That was his special duty, he did nothing else. He is a man very fitted for this class of work because he knows the people and their requirements. He has had to feed them and he knows exactly the amount of food which each person usually requires. When he undertook a similar work on behalf of the Agent for the whole line in connection with the Engineering staff gangmen, he had to deal with some 20,000 men and he spent several months travelling over the line interviewing gang after gang, asking questions and enquiring into local conditions of supply and demand, etc. In addition to making individual budgets for particular individuals he struck averages for gangs in the different districts over the line.

K-2516. Have you ever submitted any representative number of your investigations to the Bombay Labour Office and asked them how they compared with similar information which the Bombay Labour Office itself had collected ?—No.

K-2517. Would it be possible for you to supply the Commission with tabulated results of, say, 10 per cent. of the budgets of representative grades in different areas ?—I will do so. I cannot do so immediately because conditions change so rapidly that a budget which might have been extremely useful two years ago might be almost useless to-day.

K-2518. What conditions change ?—Market prices, the conditions under which the men live, their own ideas as to how they should live, and so on.

K-2519. Does the pay change as rapidly as the conditions ?—Occasionally it does in certain cases.

K-2520. Could we have a statement of the number of trade union workers employed by the B. B. & C. I. Railway, the unions which are recognized and those which are not, the number of members which each one has, and the grades from which they come ?—Yes. There are two unions which are definitely recognized. The only other unions of which I have any knowledge is that which you examined at Ajmer.

K-2521. Are there not a large number of unions ?—Not necessarily on this Railway. I only know of three unions of this description. So far as their membership is concerned, that is a very difficult matter indeed. Their membership fluctuates with the questions which interest the men at the moment.

K-2522. You have to take their alleged membership ?—I do not think one can do that.

K-2523. How can you check their information ?—We have access to their books if we ask for them.

K-2524. Can you distinguish as to whether they are paid up members or not ?—Not unless we have access to their books. But as a rule we take their word for it. Their numbers fluctuate very rapidly. For instance, there is a certain dispute in progress at one of our workshops, and the membership of the union dealing with that workshop has, for the time being, increased very rapidly ; but it is quite possible that immediately the dispute is over it will decrease. It is the same with the lines staff. It is easy to

go along the line and to talk to the men, especially the illiterate men, and to ask them whether they would like an increase in their pay. They naturally say "Yes", and they immediately become members and pay their four annas, but if the increase in pay does not materialize within a very short time they do not pay any further subscription. That is why I say there is so much fluctuation.

K-2525. Where the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway controls a considerable number of houses, in a particular district, is there any supervision of their general conditions? Is there any officer especially appointed for this purpose?—(*Mr. Kennedy*) : We have a local committee at all our stations which looks after the sanitation and cleanliness of the whole station.

K-2526. Who constitutes the committee?—The committee is composed generally of District Officers with the help of the senior subordinates, and they have the power of co-opting other people. We give particulars of it in our memorandum.

K-2527. *Mr. Clow* : Dealing with the Traffic Department, in your memorandum you say that district officers have full powers in regard to the punishment of the menial staff except in regard to fines, in regard to which their power is limited to 20 per cent. of the pay. Does that mean 20 per cent. in the month?—(*Mr. Ball*) : Yes, but it is very rarely put into force. The fines are generally very much less.

K-2528. Do you not think a lower limit is desirable?—There is no difficulty about it. As a matter of fact it is never used. The fines are generally 8 annas or Re. 1 at the outside.

K-2529. That limit does not apply to debits, does it?—They do not debit the menial staff in full. Perhaps a hand-signal may be lost; in that case we only debit a small amount and write off the rest.

K-2530. What is the maximum percentage recovered monthly for a debit from a man's pay?—It is generally recovered in instalments which he can afford to pay. We have no fixed maximum. It depends on the man's pay.

K-1531. Would he have to pay half of his month's pay?—Not so much as that.

K-2532. For how many months do the instalments run over?—About six months.

K-2533. Never more than six months?—I do not think so.

K-2534. Do you think it is an entirely satisfactory method?—I do not see any alternative.

K-2535. Even senior officers make mistakes?—I would like to know of some alternative.

K-2536. The alternative, I should have thought, was to give a man warning, and if it was found that he was repeatedly making mistakes, to dismiss him?—But most of these debits are not paid by the staff themselves but by the consignees. There are regular dealers at the stations, and, out of motives of policy I suppose they pay the debits.

K-2537. You have no legal claim against these people?—Yes, we have under the Railway Act, but we do not like to put it into force.

K-2538. Would it not be better to put the law into force against the merchant who is a rich man, rather than against the railway servant who is a poor man ?—It would generally mean a law suit lasting about a year.

K-2539. You state “ As some of the engine sheds have been brought within the Factory Act, it makes a rest day per week compulsory, and the question is under negotiation with the staff concerned ”. Do you mean that you are negotiating with your staff as to whether the Factory Act shall be applied or not ?—(*Mr. Paterson*) : No. We are only negotiating with the staff on the question of payment. The Factory Act is actually in force.

K-2540. The weekly rest day is being observed ?—Yes, it is in force. What happens is this. The men worked seven days. They worked 56 hours a week. We say “ We will pay you the same money for 51 hours a week ”. We then have to give them the rest day. They said “ No ” ; they would not do it ; they would only work 6 days of 8 hours per week ; and there was no option then but to reduce their pay by four days per month. Two sheds have taken the same money for 51 hours and a third shed has not.

K-2541. What is the position in the sheds which are not under the Factory Act ? What are the hours there ?—56. They work a full month of 30 days with no rest day.

K-2542. Do you consider that a suitable system ?—No. I would not do it myself.

K-2543. With regard to this budget which has been handed to the Commission, has it been seen by the Chief Medical Officer ?—(*Col. Hobbs*) : No.

K-2544. I would like the Chief Medical Officer to glance over it. (The document is handed to the Chief Medical Officer.) Do you consider that that is a budget which is sufficient to maintain a family of four in health ? There are no pulses, half an anna worth of vegetables per day, and no milk and no ghee ?—(*Dr. Scoresby Jackson*) : No, I do not think it is sufficient.

K-2545. Do you consider that a family could subsist for long on that diet without falling into an extremely bad state of health ?—They seem to live quite well in many cases on this budget.

K-2546. You think it is possible to do so ?—They seem to live quite well on it.

K-2547. There must be some mistake somewhere. Surely you as a doctor will agree that that diet cannot support, at any rate in theory, a family of four ?—It is very difficult to get a budget out of these people. There are lots of other little things which they get which are not included in this budget.

K-2548. That is my point. It is difficult to take that as an accurate budget ?—(*Col. Hobbs*) : This budget represents the average amount of food which this particular class of persons provide for themselves. It is not a budget which we recommend. It is a budget prepared by themselves. They consider that that budget is perfectly sufficient for their needs.

K-2549. What I wanted the Chief Medical Officer's opinion upon was whether it is in any way possible for a family to maintain its health on that diet ?—(*Dr. Scoresby Jackson*) : This is a suitable diet for that class of person. They will live on rice only.

K-2550. Without any pulses ?—Yes.

K-2551. And half an anna for vegetables for a family of four per day ?—Yes.

K-2552. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : I am not quite clear about one of your statements. Do you say that you will guarantee in the future to consider every case which is brought up to you by the unions ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : No, I do not say that I will guarantee that.

K-2553. Your reason is chiefly that there are those two unions who are fighting each other. If there was one strong union would you be prepared to take up every case which they brought before you ?—No, I would not.

K-2554. With regard to the investigations which you are undertaking, would you have any objection to putting forward the results of your investigations to the Bombay Labour Bureau and obtain the benefit of their experience ?—None at all. I am quite prepared to give the Bombay Labour Bureau any information on the subject.

K-2555. I was not suggesting it from the point of view of your giving them information. I was suggesting it from the point of view of adding to the accuracy of your information. They are experts ?—I would like to hear their recommendations. I would like to get some hints.

K-2556. Perhaps you would even be willing to allow some of your investigators to take a short course in order to learn their methods, which I understand, are supposed to be better than or as good as anything else in India ?—Certainly.

K-2557. *The Chairman* : On the point just raised by *Sir Victor Sassoon*, the Commission is concerned with a very wide range of figures in regard to this question of domestic budgets ; and it does seem desirable, particularly when you have in Bombay a certain amount of acquired skill and experience in this matter, that it should be made use of as far as possible by other investigators ; otherwise a tremendous amount of time and labour is spent to very little real purpose. I think it is a valuable suggestion that there should be collaboration, where possible, on matters of this kind. With regard to your relations with trade unions, and what you say about the facilities offered to particular unions, your statement is exactly in the same terms as that of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway ; but I take it that the general policy on this matter has really been laid down by the Railway Board ?—(*Sir Ernest Jackson*) : No. As far as the question of facilities is concerned, we were the first Railway to be called upon by a union to recognize them. We then had to draw up what I call the terms under which we would recognize them and give them facilities. These terms were originally drafted by myself. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway came in very shortly afterwards and asked for a copy of those terms. The Bombay Port Trust did the same.

K-2558. You were the pioneers and the others have followed ?—So far as the drawing up of the terms is concerned, yes.

K-2559. *Mr. Cliff* : Can you furnish the Commission with the test which entrants have to pass ?—(*Dr. Scoresby Jackson*) : We have no actual standard. We leave it to the doctor on the spot to say whether the man is fit for a day's work or not, provided he has not any disease of the skin or mouth, or any deformity, or any varicose vein, hernia, and such like. There is no actual physical standard of weight and height and so on.

K-2560. *The Chairman* : What you have just said seems to indicate that there are some instructions sent to your officers who conduct the examination. Are they printed instructions ?—Yes.

K-2561. *Mr. Cliff* : That is what I want. Can you tell us the number of people who are rejected on the examination ?—We do not worry our employees with re-examination.

K-2562. Do you accept a man after a period of sickness without examination ?—The man is only re-examined if he is sent up after sickness, or if he is sent up at the age of 35, 40, 45, 48, 50, and over. That is on the engine only. We do not often examine other people unless they are 55 years of age, and over.

K-2563. That is the class of people with which I am concerned. I want to know whether there is a number rejected ?—We reject roughly about 10 per cent. for first employment, and about 30 per cent. for further employment, but with regard to the latter there are only 1,400 examined every year, and they are all 55 to 60 years of age.

K-2564. Do you put into the category of " further employment " a man who is resuming duty after sickness ?—Yes. " Further employment " means a man who is re-examined after sickness, or a man who is re-examined according to rules, or the eye-sight examination for drivers and guards.

K-2565. That figure is approximately 30 per cent. ?—Yes, but there are only 1,400 cases a year, and they are all elderly people.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**Mr. C. W. A. GIDNEY**, President. **Mr. H. T. WILSON**, Member, and **Mr. J. TURNER**, Adviser, representing the National Union of Railwaymen of India and Burma.

K-2566. *The Chairman* : In your memorandum you say : " That the leave rules should be the same whether the leave be taken in India or abroad, and that no distinction be made between Europeans and Anglo-Indians "—(*Mr. Gidney*) : I wish to add Indians.

K-2567. But do I understand rightly that the existing rules are based on domicile ?—Yes

K-2568. And that they apply equally to persons of the same domicile ?—They apply only to Europeans at present.

K-2569. Your claim, as stated here, is that although your domicile may be India, you should have the same leave as covenanted railway servants whose domicile is European ?—That is so.

K-2570. You wish to get the double choice : you wish in the one case to be treated as domiciled in India, and, in addition to that, to have the option of being treated as if you were domiciled in Europe ?—No.

K-2571. Then will you explain that ?—(*Mr. Wilson*) : The Anglo-Indian cannot enjoy commuted furlough in his own country ; that is what we are really after. If I want 18 months' furlough commuted into 9 months, I have to go out of India to enjoy that privilege ; but as India is my mother country I would like to be able to enjoy that privilege in India, because after years of railway service you do feel you would like a spell of 9 months on full pay. I cannot afford to take it on half pay, having regard to what I have to pay for my children's education. That is why we Anglo-Indians want the privilege extended to us of being able to take commuted furlough in our own mother country.

K-2572. Then with regard to retirement you ask that if an employee is physically fit he should be allowed to continue until the age of 60 instead of being retired at 55 ?—(*Mr. Gidney*) : Yes.

K-2573. *Mr. Clow* : In your memorandum under " Safety ", you say : " consider case of McFlaclem and Burby ". What are you referring to there ?—One of these men was punished for going out under rest.

K-2574. What does that mean ?—Some railways allow a certain amount of rest between trips ; for instance, the G. I. P. Railway allow 12 hours on the home station and 8 hours on the outstation before the new journey. One of these men was called to duty within the 8 hours ; he had an accident and was punished.

K-2575. You say : " details are deliberately made whereby the staff are turned around at outstations within 3 and 4 hours and less ". What does " turned around " mean ?—That means coming back on the return journey.

K-2576. What is your complaint there ?—That there should be a certain amount of rest given to everyone on their home station and their outstations. I realize that in the busy season this is almost impracticable 3 or 4 hours is not sufficient.

K-2577. Even if the station is very near ?—We do not have station near ; they are about 180 or 190 miles away, constituting about 5 or hours work.

K-2578. *Mr. Joshi* : Is membership of the Mutual Benefit Society organized by the railway administration still compulsory ?—On the Great Indian Peninsula Railway at present it is not ; in August of this year a resolution was passed agreeing that those who joined after the 1st January, 1928, should not be compelled to become members ; but those who have joined from the inception of the fund to the end of 1927 are still compelled to remain in the fund.

K-2579. Compelled by whom ?—By the Administration.

K-2580. How are they compelled ?—They are not allowed to resign ; their Mutual Benefit fees are cut out of their pay.

K-2581. If they ceased to subscribe would they be dismissed ?—They cannot cease to subscribe because the money is deducted from the pay sheet.

K-2582. Supposing they write to the Agent and ask that their subscriptions should not be deducted ?—I am not in a position to answer that because that has to do with the Agent.

K-2583. Does your union co-operate with the other unions on the railways in India in trade union activities ? Are you affiliated to the All-India Railwaymen's Federation ?—We are.

K-2584. Since when ?—Since July of this year.

K-2585. *Mr. Asavle* : Are conditions the same for Indians as for Anglo-Indians ?—Exactly the same ; there is no racial discrimination on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway at present.

K-2586. Do you mean that Indians have been recommended to the A and B classes ?—Provided they have the merit and education.

K-2587. *Mr. Gregory* : With regard to your reply to Mr. Clow, what is the average outward and inward journey ?—A Driver does about 6 hours' work going ; that is including his running time but not including from the time he is called. For instance, a man starting at 5 o'clock in the morning will be called at 3 o'clock. That means he has to keep awake from 3 o'clock until the time he gets to his destination, which may be 10-30 o'clock. Another half hour must then be allowed for the examination of his train.

K-2588. What is the actual average time ?—About 7 hours.

K-2589. About 7 hours out and 7 hours back ?—Yes.

K-2590. Roughly what is the actual rest they get in between those two trips, the outward and the homeward trips ?—It depends on the details that are made.

K-2591. Is it not often the case that the Drivers desire a shorter rest at the outstation ?—No, I think Drivers prefer to have rest at the outstation. It has been so arranged that a minimum rest is given at outstations.

K-2592. Can you say that definitely ?—I was a Driver for about 18 years and I can definitely say that I never asked to come out under rest.

K-2593. Did you complain about over rest ?—No.

K-2594. In your memorandum with regard to facilities for training and promotion of workmen you say : ' It is to be regretted that one exist for specialized training which would enable the subordinate staff to qualify for higher posts '. To what staff are you referring ?—All staffs and more especially the upper subordinates.

K-2595. Do you also include the lower subordinates being trained for upper subordinate posts ?—Yes.

K-2596. Do you know that schools exist at Bina, Asansol and other places ?—Yes.

K-2597. Do they not provide a certain amount of facilities for training for promotion ?—In my opinion the training schools are not sufficient.

K-2598. But you say here none exists ?—There are schools.

K-2599. Then this is not correct ?—It is not quite correct.



K-2600. In regard to relations between staff and rank and file, you say : " In this connection this Union would suggest that the subordinate staff be given free access to their Divisional Officers at all times ". Is it not a fact that Divisional Officers continually make inspections of their divisions both by trolley and by train ?—It may be, but that is not what we really mean.

K-2601. Do they or do they not make these inspections ?—They do.

K-2602. As a rule may not any subordinate go up to an officer and arrange to talk to him about any complaint ?—It depends upon the officer himself, whether he is one who will interview his men directly or whether he is one who will ask him if he has permission from his junior officer.

K-2603. There are occasions where they do ?—I agree.

K-2604. With regard to sanitary arrangements you say : " a suitable person should be appointed on a fixed salary to see to the general cleanliness of quarters and compounds, at all stations where necessary ". I presume you do not include all the small stations ?—Certainly not.

K-2605. The larger stations ?—Yes.

K-2606. Is it not the case that quite a number of qualified sanitary inspectors are appointed at these larger stations ?—At the very large stations, yes. There should be assistant sanitary inspectors under those men to visit the smaller stations.

K-2607. But there are certain subordinates who are definitely responsible for such work ; for instance, is not the Permanent Way Inspector responsible for the sanitation of certain small stations within his beat ?—I am asking for a sanitary inspector, not for the Permanent Way Inspector to look after sanitary work.

K-2608. There is the Chief Medical Officer's Branch the inspectors of which go out ; is not that sufficient ?—I am not prepared to admit that the sanitary inspectors appointed at these large stations go out on the districts to visit these places.

K-2609. What you really want is an addition to the staff to inspect the small roadside stations between the large stations where sanitary inspectors exist ?—That is so.

K-2610. In reply to the Chairman you said you would like 9 months furlough on full pay ; that is to say, you would commute your total furlough to which you are entitled to 9 months on full pay ?—(*Mr. Wilson*) : Yes.

K-2611. But do you know of any case where 9 months on full pay is given continuously as leave ?—Yes, all the officials enjoy that, and I would get it if I went out of India.

K-2612. It is usually 8 months ?—I will say 8 months. Those of us who are born in India would like to enjoy that privilege in India.

K-2613. *Col. Gidney* : Of whom does your membership consist ?—(*Mr. Gidney*) : It is cosmopolitan.

K-2614. You make no distinction ?—No.

K-2615. I do not think there is an older railway union in the whole of India ?—I do not know of any union, especially for the small subscriptions that we ask of our members so old and which has shown so much activity.

K-2616. What funds have you at your credit to-day ?—We have Rs. 56,000.

K-2617. And you distribute your benefits to everyone alike ?—Yes.

K-2618. Have you ever known of a case of an Anglo-Indian or a domiciled European Ticket Collector who has been promoted to an A grade Station Master within five years service ?—Not to my knowledge.

K-2619. Mr. Gregory asked you about certain railway training schools and you gave him an answer which rather fitted into his question. Have you anything at the back of your mind as to the training for the official class ?—Although recently, owing to the pressure of the legislature, the railway administration has introduced training schools at various places and will shortly open an officers training school at Dehra Dun, in view of the fact that India has had railways for 70 years, longer than any other Colony in the British Empire, it is a sad reflection to me that it should be demanded of India alone that her sons should be sent away to England, many thousands of miles away and at the expense of many thousands of rupees, to be trained, and then sent back here for employment in their own country. I am of opinion that India should have been so governed that long ago it should have been able to supply all its railway servants, officials and subordinates, from India.

K-2620. In view of what you have said about rest hours, am I to understand that drivers are slaves to over-time, and get extra money at the expense of their health ?—Yes, certainly.

K-2621. In other words, would you favour the introduction of the principles of the Geneva Convention ?—The Geneva Convention, so far as I understand it, is not applicable to the running staff.

K-2622. Would your union favour it ?—Yes.

K-2623. Or as an alternative, would you agree to the drivers' pay being a little increased and the run made shorter ?—Yes, that would meet it, but I think there would be a difficulty arising from the railway side. That is to say the railway would have to shorten the trips and increase the staff, or duplicate, but I myself am of opinion that duplication of staff, although it would mean less money for the working man, would ensure his better health and would minimize breakdowns.

K-2624. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Then you would agree to lower wages if there was duplication of staff, so that you do not propose to increase the cost to the railways ?—I mean with regard to over-time, the substantive pay of a railway man should not be decreased.

K-2625. Then it would entail extra cost to the railway ?—Yes, but it would to a great extent solve the problem of unemployment.

K-2626. *The Chairman* : Are you recognized by the Company ?—We are.

K-2627. Do they receive you ?—Yes.

K-2628. *Col. Gidney* : Can you get access to the Agent whenever you want ?—No.

K-2629. Have you ever had access to the Agent ?—No.

K-2630. Have you ever asked for it ?—Yes, twice.

K-2631. Has it been refused ?—We have not had a reply yet.

K-2632. Then they have taken no notice of your request ?—So far they have not replied ; that amounts to taking no notice.

K-2633. Do you think your Union is playing as important a part as it can in the administration of Railways ?—No, I do not think our union is.

K-2634. Does the Great Indian Peninsula Railway's Agent look upon Railway unions with favour ?—I do not think so.

K-2635. Is his attitude hostile ?—To a great extent.

K-2636. Do you mean by that that he looks upon his staff councils as his own child and the unions as the workmen's child and that they would not form a happy family ?—Yes, I think so.

K-2637. Have you always been courteous to the Agent ?—Most courteous.

K-2638. *The Chairman* : How often have you asked to see the Agent ?—This year from July we have asked him twice ; altogether we have addressed him on ten occasions. We were recognized in September last year.

K-2639. *Col. Gidney* : Why is it that the Agent has treated you in this contemptuous manner, as if you did not exist ; is it because you have been loyal and not threatened him with strikes ?—It may be ; but our attitude is not for a strike.

K-2640. Then it means that because you have been peaceful with him he has not recognized you ?—It amounts to that.

K-2641. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : What is the membership ?—Over 3,000.

K-2642. *Sir Alexander Murray* : But you have only 1,000 members on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway ?—We have over 1,500.

K-2643. *Col. Gidney* : Are those all well and highly placed members : you do not have any of the lower paid staff on your rolls ?—We have only 92 of the lowest paid staff. The others are all well paid men of the upper subordinate class.

K-2644. In your opinion will you say why you have been treated with such scant courtesy by the Agent ?—I think there is a misunderstanding on the part of the Agent. Perhaps the Agent is under the impression that unions are strike agents. I may tell the Commission that the National Union of Railwaymen do not believe in strikes. In 1913 when there was a sympathetic strike, and a lamentable strike it was, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway spelt that strike as "S-T-R-O-K-E" and for the last sixteen years the Great Indian Peninsula Railway men have not yet got over the effects of that strike. My Council has made it almost impossible for the members of the National Union to go out on strike, inasmuch as we have laid down the percentage of ayes at 90 per cent.

K-2645. With regard to the G. I. P. Mutual Benefit Society is it a fact that it was only quite recently, i.e., after representation in the Legislative Assembly, that the Agent of the G. I. P. passed the order making it no longer compulsory for new entrants to join the Society ?—The resolution was only passed in August of this year.

K-2646. And is it a fact that it only applies to new entrants ?—Yes.

K-2647. Then it means that this Society still functions and maintains its membership of former employees ?—Yes.

K-2648. Is it a fact that the G. I. P. Railway entertains one of its officials, an assistant auditor, to control the affairs of this society ?—According to the rules I believe that is so.

K-2649. Do you as President of the N. W. Railway Union desire to make your union attractive ?—Yes, in every way.

K-2650. Do you think if you had a benefit society it would form one of your chief attractions ?—So far as a union is concerned, I think a benefit society is one of its chief attractions.

K-2651. Do you think the G. I. P. Railway by retaining this compulsory membership of its society is really preventing you from popularizing your union ?—As a matter of fact, since the order rescinding compulsion was passed in August we have got over 300 new members to our Union.

K-2652. So that that proves what I say, does it ?—Yes.

K-2653. The subscriptions to this Mutual Benefit Society are deducted from the men's pay sheets ?—Yes.

K-2654. *The Chairman* : A contribution from the Company is added to those subscriptions ?—Yes.

K-2655. *Col. Gidney* : Has it prevented your Union from developing and becoming attractive ?—It has certainly done so.

K-2656. It has benefitted the members, no doubt, but you would have benefitted them just the same, had you your own Mutual Benefit Society ?—More so.

K-2657. And you would have been a more powerful and larger union to-day ?—Yes.

K-2658. Then it seems that the Agent is not in favour of encouraging and developing Railway unions ?—Yes.

K-2659. *Diwan Chand Lall* : Can you speak also for the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway ?—I am sorry, we cannot, because we have only half a dozen members on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway.

K-2660. *Mr. Cliff* : You complain about hours of work. What do you say is the average running schedule when a man goes to an outstation ?—It takes him about 6 to 7 hours running time.

K-2661. How much rest ?—That depends upon how the details are made up for the outward journey.

K-2662. Can you give an average ?—I am sorry, I cannot. It may mean 6 hours going, then 3 hours rest, and then another 6 hours coming home driving.

K-2663. Does that mean 12 to 13 hours driving with 3 to 4 hours rest ?—Yes.

K-2664. Does the same apply to guards ?—In a good many instances.

K-2665. Is that exceptional ?—It is not exceptional so far as passenger and mail trains are concerned.

K-2666. Does it always occur that the duty commences early in the morning ?—Not necessarily.

K-2667. Is it likely that it might commence at mid-day ?—Yes, men leave at mid-day.

K-2668. With the same limitation of rest ?—Yes.

K-2669. Will you explain the paragraph in your memorandum under the head "Administration". What are the difficulties which have arisen because of the re-organization that has taken place on the railways ?—Since the introduction of the divisional scheme, that is the transportation scheme, the relationship between employer and employee compares very unfavourably with the close friendly relationship of employer and employee before the introduction of this scheme. Since the introduction of the transportation scheme I believe the time of the Divisionals is crowded out with routine work and they have no time to get into closer relationship with their workmen. When I was on the railway there was a spirit not only of friendliness, but I should say of communion between officers and employees. But for that communion and friendly relationship between officer and workman the Great Indian Peninsula Railway would not have been able to accomplish the wonderful work it did during the late War. Since the introduction of the transportation scheme, rightly or wrongly, there is a mistrust of the employer by the employee because he cannot get into touch with him. That is not due to the Divisional himself but to the junior and upper subordinate officers who do not make it a practice to see that their subordinates have access to their Divisionals.

K-2670. Is it not possible to get the same contact under the divisional system as there was under the departmental system ?—(*Mr. Wilson*) : Since the introduction of the transportation scheme, and with the introduction of the transportation scheme, we became a State Railway. The conclusion which is forced upon an employee of average intelligence is that the root cause of all the unrest and discontent and unpleasant relationship that exist between the employer and employee is the stringent financial policy laid upon the shoulders of our officers by the Railway Board. We feel that our officers, many of them well-intentioned, would like to ameliorate adverse conditions, but they feel that they have been bound down so rigidly by their budget that there is no financial margin. Hence they keep aloof ; in fact, the impression gained is that they feel that if they come towards us we shall be too full of grievances for them to listen to. I have been a great advocate of the State railways finding it possible every year to include in their budget some money to be used purely for the amelioration and improvement of any adverse conditions under which the staff are working. It comes to this, that we can ask for more staff and gain

the support of the station staff committee as well as the divisional superintendents, but when it goes up to the Chief Transportation Superintendent, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it is rejected for want of money. In what I am about to say I think I am striking at the root cause of all our trouble. I understand that in the last 5 years 19 crores of our earnings have been diverted by Government into other channels.

K-2671. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Which channels do you mean ?—For other schemes : irrigation, education and general revenue.

K-2672. *Mr. Clow* : After allowing for interest on capital ?—I think so. Could not some of that money every year be given back to us in order to improve adverse conditions under which we are labouring ?

K-2673. *Mr. Cliff* : Your point is that with regard to the agents and officers, it is not lack of will but lack of power ?—Yes.

K-2674. And you think the black sheep is the Railway Board ?—Yes.

K-2675. Is it much more difficult to get contact under the divisional system than under the departmental system, and, if so, for what reason ?—Principally for the reason I have given you.

K-2676. That does not seem to touch it ?—(*Mr. Gidney*) : The trouble is this, that we cannot get into touch with the Divisionals. For instance, a man is fined. If he thinks he has been punished wrongly, he makes an appeal to the Divisional or to his junior officer, but the subordinate officer who has recommended that he should be so punished, naturally stands in his way. If a man has been discharged, that is, has been dealt with by the Divisional, then he has been dealt with on the recommendation of a subordinate officer and his junior officer. When a man appeals against that discharge, he cannot get in touch with his divisional officer on account of his subordinate officer and his junior officer having recommended that he should be discharged. If he wishes to appeal to the head of the department, these are the obstacles in his way.

K-2677. Is that a question of distance ; do you mean that a man may be fined at some station a long way from the divisional headquarters and therefore there is lack of contact ?—No, in the divisional headquarters itself.

K-2678. Is a divisional man less accessible than a departmental man ?—Yes. (*Mr. Wilson*) : There is a widespread fear amongst the staff of interviewing an officer by way of getting redress.

K-2679. But would not that occur under a departmental system ?—Not if we had a grievances board.

K-2680. I understand you mean not so much a grievances committee as machinery for dealing with matters arising out of your employment ?—Yes, that is so.

K-2681. *Mr. Ahmed* : Why do you call your union national ?—(*Mr. Gidney*) : It is national ; it comprises all classes.

K-2682. Hindu and Mohammedan ?—Yes, everyone.

K-2683. Is your union registered ?—Yes.

K-2684. Is it affiliated to the Trade Union Congress ?—No, we are only affiliated to the Railwaymen's Federation.

K-2685. How is it your union is not affiliated to the Trade Union Congress ?—I think that is our own business.

K-2686. When you complain of the sons of India being sent to England for training, do you include Hindu, Mohammedan and other sons of India ?—I include all.

K-2687. And when you say “ Filtered water should be provided at all stations ”, do you mean that should be provided also for Hindus and Mohammedans ?—Certainly; there is no racial discrimination.

K-2688. And your demand for sufficient rest periods also applies to them ?—Yes.

K-2689. The other things for which you are asking also have reference to them ?—Yes.

K-2690. If a Ticket Collector does not require a high official of the railway or a relative of a high official to produce a ticket, do you think he should be dismissed ?—I have never known of any such case.

K-2691. You ask that the age of retirement should be 60 instead of 55 ; should that apply to Indians ?—Yes, everyone.

K-2692. You have told us that your union has Rs. 56,000. Have you distributed any money to Hindus or Mohammedans who are not Anglo-Indians or domiciled Europeans ?—The National Union of Railwaymen is a cosmopolitan concern and everyone has equal rights to all its privileges.

K-2693. Example is better than precept ; have you on any occasion given a single rupee to a Hindu or Mohammedan student to enable him to continue his studies and education ?—We have no educational scheme.

K-2694. You have said you have distributed money ?—Yes, we have. We have distributed privileges to everyone alike indiscriminately. We have just successfully defended a man by the name of Pillai ; we have spent about Rs. 800 or over Rs. 1,000 for Mr. Pillai who got himself into trouble a little while ago.

K-2695. What was the trouble about ?—It was a Railway Act trouble.

K-2696. Is he a Christian ?—No, he is not.

K-2697. Is he a Hindu ?—I do not know.

K-2698. *The Chairman* : We are told this union accepts members of all kinds on equality and distributes benefits impartially ?—Exactly.

K-2699. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How much money did you expend in benefits during your last year ?—I cannot tell you that exactly, but I know for a fact that we have spent nearly Rs. 7,000 in one case ; that is the case of Mooney and Brookes.

K-2700. You are the President of the society ; you can tell me how much money you have spent in benefits during the past 12 months ?—I cannot give you exact figures regarding that.

K-2701. *The Chairman* : To what period do these figures, that you have given us, refer ?—These benefits are for about 14 years, we have spent over 4 lakhs of rupees.

K-2702. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You have been in existence for about 32 years ?—Yes.

K-2703. *The Chairman* : You had to build up your permanent fund ?—Yes, and I may tell you that the 1913 strike swallowed up everything that we had, and from 1914 or 1915 this has been built up.

K-2704. *Sir Alexander Murray* : In the first 18 years of your existence were not you spending any money on benefits ?—Yes.

K-2705. Is not that included in this Rs. 4,32,000 ?—No.

K-2706. Will you give us a copy of your Report showing what this money represents ?—I will furnish that.

K-2707. You cannot tell me to within a thousand or two thousand rupees how much money you spent last year in benefits ?—No.

K-2708. How many men did you defend last year ?—We defended 8 or 10 men ; that is legal defence.

K-2709. In your memorandum you evidently say that the Railway's Mutual Benefit Society has been working to the detriment of the employees ?—Yes.

K-2710. But is it not the case that last year they defended 70 men ?—We defended them also.

K-2711. I am not asking you that ; I have already asked you what you have done. I am telling you what the Railway's Mutual Benefit Society has done. Apparently the Railway last year defended 70 men ?—It may have.

K-2712. And in the defence of those 70 men spent Rs. 30,000 ?—It may have.

K-2713. Do you think it is to the detriment of the employees if they do that ?—It may show that our membership has come down.

K-2714. No, your membership is going up ?—It has been going up ever since the compulsion was abolished. It was going down as far as August ; as far as August we were at a standstill. Since the compulsion has been abolished we have made leaps and bounds in our membership.

K-2714a. You say in your memorandum : “ These societies beyond agitating upon grievances confer no monetary benefits on their members ”. What do you mean by that ? I do not object to your saying you are doing good work for your members, because I believe you are, but I strongly protest against you making statements like that regarding what the Railway are doing also for their membership ?—We have asked for that to be eliminated by way of corrigenda.

K-2714b. We have already deleted a lot of paragraphs but we have never been asked to delete that statement. The Secretaries have not been asked to delete it ; you have actually written it in with pen and ink to emphasize it ; it is not printed.

*The Chairman* : I understand you withdraw that sentence ?—Yes.

The witnesses withdrew.

Mr. D. S. BURN, Agent ; Mr. A. RICHARDSON, Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer ; Mr. P. WOOD, Acting Deputy Agent (Staff) ; Mr. C. G. LIMPUS, Deputy Transportation Superintendent ; Mr. W. T. GRIFFITHS, Divisional Traffic Manager ; Mr. V. R. KUNDUNMAL, Assistant Deputy Agent ; and Dr. P. L. STALLARD, Acting Principal Medical and Health Officer, on behalf of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

K-2715. *The Chairman* : In your memorandum, in answer to our question whether the labour supply is affected by wage changes, you tell



us "It has been found that wage increases to staff, such as semi-skilled and unskilled labourers, have resulted in increased absenteeism." That is a statement we have come across in more than one place ; but I notice with interest that you have added to that a comment and you say that this has only been temporary, that in course of time the men will return to normal working. May I take it that means that when there is a rise in wages, after a little while the standard of life of the people concerned also rises, and therefore they have at least an equal inducement to regular work as they had before ?—(*Mr. Burn*) : I agree.

K-2716. Although, as has happened in other countries, for a short period an increase in cash wages may have led, to put it baldly, to the waste of the increase, that has only been temporary ?—Yes.

K-2717. Dealing with trade combinations, you say that in dealing with men on your system you have to deal with three railway unions.—Yes.

K-2718. With regard to the first two of these, the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Men's Union and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Staff Union. do these cater for the same or different classes of railway servants ?—I should say that they cater in some respects for the same classes and in certain respects for particular classes : that is to say, some of the members of the railway staff may belong to one union or to another union, but in particular cases, for instance the Wadi Bunder Goods staff, the Railway Staff Union have all the people employed there in their union. But they cater to any kind of staff ; anybody can join the union.

K-2719. Are they competing and rival unions ?—I should say they are.

K-2720. How will you get over the difficulty of having to deal with rival unions catering for the same class of men ?—I do not think we have any demands put forward by one union which conflicts with the demands of the other.

K-2721. Then, you have listened to both these unions ?—That is so.

K-2722. Has there been any sign of these unions joining together, or is there any difficulty in their doing so ?—I think some attempt was made to combine them, but I do not think there is any likelihood of their doing so. One is a large union, and the small one is I think afraid of being swallowed up by the bigger one.

K-2723. Which is the large union ?—The Railwaymen's Union is the large union ; it has about 40,000 members.

K-2724. What is your machinery for hearing the representations from the unions ? Do you hear them only when they ask to be heard ?—I always meet the officers of the union if they wish to have any interview with me. I have received several deputations from the unions ; I have a very large correspondence with the unions. They correspond freely with me and I see them any time they wish to see me.

K-2725. You have no regular machinery such as a quarterly joint meeting ?—We have no regular meetings ; we have meetings as they desire.

K-2726. That means I suppose that there will pile up an alarming list of troubles and grievances to present to you ? Sometimes I have had rather lengthy meetings with the union.

K-2727. You tell us that you receive representations from the unions ; that of course means all three of the unions to which you have referred ?—Yes ; that is so.

K-2728. With regard to grievances affecting a class of workers you are prepared to consider them, but you do not care to take up each and every case concerning only individuals ?—That is so. I should like to qualify that by saying that recently I have written to the unions to say that I cannot receive individual grievances unless they refer to typical cases or unless some very harsh treatment is concerned which the unions wish to bring before me. I have been swamped with enquiries regarding individual cases, and I do not think it is worth while having to hear all individual cases that come forward.

K-2729. What machinery have you in the shape of staff committees to deal with minor grievances ?—We have a staff council on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. The basis of the staff council is the divisional committee. We have a divisional committee for each of our five divisional centres, and each committee consists of five officers of the administration and five elected by members of the staff, except the Bombay Division where there are six of each. They are elected by all the members of the staff of one year's experience, except those paid Rs. 30 and under. An elected member must have three years of service. The divisional committees meet quarterly, and they report to the railway council which also meets quarterly and consists of ten members, five nominated by me and five elected, one by each of the divisional committees. In addition to the divisional committees there are station committees, but I need not trouble the Commission with them as they are not so important.

K-2730. How long have you had these in existence ?—They have been working for the last six or seven years.

K-2731. Have you found them useful ?—I have found them extremely useful as a means of communicating to the staff and as a means of putting the views of the staff before us.

K-2732. Have the staff freely co-operated in this scheme ?—Yes ; they have.

K-2733. You are not aware of any dissatisfaction on their part ?—No ; so far as I know, the staff is quite satisfied with the committees and have not suggested any alteration in their constitution.

K-2734. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : You are employing a very large number of people in various grades of service ?—Yes.

K-2735. Your revenues are derived from rates and freights which you charge the public ?—That is so.

K-2736. It was stated to us that you work on a commercial basis ?—That is so.

K-2737. Will you explain to me what you mean by “ commercial basis ” ?—I think what is meant by working on a commercial basis is that it is necessary to have a proper return on the capital spent on the lines.

K-2738. You have a practical monopoly of transport ?—We have a monopoly in transport in certain places, and we compete for traffic in other places.

K-2739. You have got a monopoly in a major portion of your line, and you regulate your rates and freights so as to cover the operating expenses and to yield a proper return on the capital investment ?—And according to what the traffic can bear.

K-2740. In cases where the traffic cannot bear the charges based on commercial workings, you charge less ?—We charge what we consider the traffic is able to bear.

K-2741. If you worked your line on a commercial basis, would you charge a rate which would provide for operating expenses, including disbursements for labour and staff and for a reasonable return on the capital invested? If your rates and freights are regulated on that basis, you will be taking no advantage of the monopolist position that you occupy in the matter of transport.—I am not very clear about the purport of your question. I say we charge the traffic what it can bear. We cannot charge the traffic what it cannot bear.

K-2742. You must have certain principles on which you regulate the rates. Supposing you found in a particular case that the traffic would not bear the charges sufficient to cover the operating expenses, would you reduce the rates?—If the rates charged are not sufficient to cover the expenses, then Government will have to supply the deficiency.

K-2743. Then, you are working under a guarantee from Government that they will pay the deficiency in working the railways?—The railway is under Government.

K-2744. *The Chairman* : You are directed to run your Railway on a commercial basis, as a business concern?—That is so.

K-2745. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : As you are working on a commercial basis, have you bestowed any thought on the question of developing along your line new industries by special rates for certain classes of goods?—Certainly we charge special rates for particular classes of traffic.

K-2746. That is to say you will work at a loss in the hope of a future increased traffic?—It might be reasonable for a railway to accept traffic at a loss to help an industry over a critical time.

K-2747. That is one part of it. If the industry is already established you help it to tide over unfavourable times by accepting traffic at a loss. But that does not increase your traffic. There is another part of your policy. Do you encourage the growth of new industries along your line by accepting traffic at a loss so that in course of time the growth of those industries may provide you enough traffic to enable you to work at a profit?—I am sorry I have not understood what you say.

K-2748. If an industry established along your line is suffering from depression you help it by reducing the rates temporarily?—That is so.

K-2749. My next question is whether you would extend the same facility to new industries in the hope of their getting established along your line?—Whether we would charge new industries rates which were less than would cover operating expenses?

K-2750. Yes.—I should say that as a general principle we should not.

K-2751. Then, how do you justify the claim that you are working on a commercial basis, because if you did so your object would be to increase your revenues by encouraging the development of new industries. These industries would in time provide you with traffic for the carriage of raw material and manufactured goods.

K-2752. *The Chairman* : Surely that depends upon the period for which the loss would be incurred?—It depends on particular cases. I said that it should not be the general policy, but if you could cite any particular case, then I would consider it on its merits, and if I considered it desirable I would take that action.

K-2753. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Do you not put these cases before the Rates Tribunal ?—The Rates Tribunal deals with such applications.

K-2754. *The Chairman* : Have you power in your Railway to lower the rates for a period in order to meet the case raised by Sir Ibrahim ?—There is a minimum fixed for each particular commodity and I have no power to go below the minimum fixed.

K-2755. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : Who fixes the minimum ?—Government.

K-2756. I am not challenging the right of Government to fix the minimum. I am simply asking for information regarding the principles on which the minimum is based ?—I should not like to answer that question on the spur of the moment. I have to look up the papers before I can give an answer to the Commission to meet that point. I shall let you have that information.

K-2757. *Mr. Clow* : You have introduced the “ Rowan System ” in your workshops at Parel and Matunga and it has been very successful both from your point of view and from the point of view of your men ?—Yes, that is so.

K-2758. It applies at the present moment to a very small proportion of the men in the shops ?—Yes, only to a very small proportion.

K-2759. Is it possible to extend it ?—It was brought in against the wishes of the men when it was first started. I think it would be possible to extend it now.

K-2760. Do you think that the men appreciate the advantage of that system ?—Yes, there is no question about that.

K-2761. With regard to efficiency you give some very interesting tables in your memorandum. They show a remarkable reduction in costs and several other matters and you say in that connection : “ But unless the efficiency of the staff had increased to keep pace with these methods, it would not have been possible to have achieved such results.” Have your staff any share in the profits resulting from increased efficiency ?—No.

K-2762. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : But is the increased efficiency due to any greater effort expended by men than they used to do before, or is that due to managing methods only ?—It is chiefly due to managing methods.

K-2763. *Mr. Clow* : In your memorandum, dealing with the extent of deductions on account of fines and so on, you give an account of the gross and net wages. Do the net wages allow for debits ?—No, they do not allow for debits. They only include fines, provident fund subscriptions and income-tax.

K-2764. Have you any idea of the amount of debits in any particular period ?—I am afraid I have not.

K-2765. How are these debits recovered ? What is the maximum period for which a man has to pay his debit instalments ?—I should say—I am now speaking without the book—it would be not more than one year.

K-2766. What proportion of the pay is a man debited generally, for instance in a case of loss of goods ?—There are two rules governing the

matter, one of which lays down that no employee is permitted to take loans from either the Provident Fund or the Co-operative Credit Society which necessitate an aggregate monthly deduction exceeding 25 per cent. of his monthly pay and allowances, except in special cases ; and the other that fines should be restricted to the maximum of 10 per cent. of an employee's salary. Compulsory debits such as Provident Fund contribution, income-tax, fines and audit debits against the station staff of the Commercial Department are limited to 20 per cent. of the employee's salary.

K-2767. Could you give us an idea of the total amount of debits in any year, and the number of men who have paid debits ?—I am sorry I cannot give any figures, because we do not put them in a separate list and consider what they are. But I can tell the Commission that they have been reduced very considerably.

K-2768. Could you not give us an idea of the number of men that pay debits and the total they pay ?—I shall try and get the information.

K-2769. *Mr. Joshi* : The G. I. P. Railway Union tells us that your Railway does not generally appoint Indians as A Grade Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters. Is that true ?—I can say that a good proportion of our staff are Indians.

K-2770. But are there any Indians appointed as A Grade Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters ?—No.

K-2771. Is there any Indian Divisional Transportation Inspector ?—No.

K-2772. May I take it that no Indians will be appointed to these posts ?—They have not been appointed so far. But there is no reason why they never will be appointed.

K-2773. Is there any reason to hope that they will be appointed ?—There is every ground for hope.

K-2774. Who appoints these Station Masters ?—The Divisional Transportation Superintendent.

K-2775. From what class are they selected ?—Station Masters are selected from Assistant Station Masters, and Assistant Station Masters from Guards.

K-2776. But is there any reason why so far no Indian has been appointed as A Grade Station Master or Assistant Station Master ?—I take it that the men who have been appointed were men whom the Divisional Transportation Superintendent thought the best men for the posts. And they filled the posts according to their capacity for the work.

K-2777. Is the Divisional Transportation Superintendent an Indian or a European ?—Divisional Transportation Superintendents on the G. I. P. are all Europeans.

K-2778. And they considered that no Indian was found fit to occupy any of these posts ?—I would not say that no Indian was found fit, but these people who have been appointed were found fitter.

K-2779. By what criterion ?—The Divisional Transportation Superintendents go by the history of these people who are available for these posts and also by their own knowledge of them.

K-2780. I want you to help the Commission in solving a difficult problem. On the one hand the railway unions and the general Indian public say that Indians are not given a chance to occupy these high posts, and that appointments are filled not merely on grounds of merit, but on grounds of race. But you say that so far every A Grade Station Master or Assistant Station Master who has been appointed is fitter than any Indian in your service. Could you tell us what the real position is? There is also another difficulty. The people who appoint these Station Masters are all Europeans. The people who come before the Commission and say that Europeans have been found fitter than any Indian on the railway are also Europeans. I have not seen a single Indian Railway officer come before the Commission so that I might ask him whether he thinks that the Europeans are fitter than any Indian. How are you going to help the Commission in arriving at the real facts?

K-2781. *The Chairman* : The point is : in your view what is the reason that up till now Indians have not found places in these higher grades of the service.—I am not prepared to say that Indians have not found places in the higher grades of the service. For instance there are 44 Indian Permanent Way Inspectors out of a total strength of 99.

K-2782. Is any proportion fixed for this service as a result of the Lee Commission's recommendations?—No proportion is fixed for Permanent Way Inspectors ; these men were appointed because they were considered suitable.

K-2783. Is there any proportion fixed for A Grade Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters?—I think that the matter should be considered as a whole and not by taking particular grades. I may tell the Commission that 13 per cent. of the higher appointments, *i.e.*, appointments on Rs. 200 a month and more are filled by Indians. I think that that is a very large proportion considering that in the old days there was an extremely small number who filled these appointments. The proportion of Indians is increasing every year.

K-2784. I know that you are generous to Indians. But I want to know whether there is any reason why no Indian has till now been found fit for these posts of A Grade Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters. It is not a thing that could be easily believed that in the whole service no Indian was found fit or rather that every European was found fitter?—I say again that it is not stated anywhere that no Indian was found fit. But the people who have been appointed were found fitter for the service. I do not say that no Indian on the G. I. P. Railway was found fit for these posts. I have no doubt that in time we shall find them occupying these posts.

K-2785. *Mr. Joshi* : Are Europeans directly appointed as A Grade Station Masters, or are they promoted from B and C Grades?—These posts of Assistant Station Masters are filled from Guards.

K-2786. And no Indian Guard was found fit to be an A Grade Station Master or Assistant Station Master?—I do not say that no Indian was found fit, but the man who was considered fitter was a European in these instances.

K-2787. You have amongst Guards A and B Grades. Will you tell us how many Indian Guards are in the A Grade ?—Out of 430 A Grade Guards we have four Indians.

K-2788. Are these four permanent or temporary ?—Permanent.

K-2789. In the B Grade how many Guards are Europeans and how many are Indians ?—The statement I have with me does not show the B Grade Guards. The appointments that I was speaking about are over Rs. 200.

K-2790. Will you supply us information on that later on ?—Yes, with pleasure.

K-2791. Then about Ticket Collectors. There are Ticket Collectors who generally start on Rs. 60 and go up to 90. I want to know, out of these Ticket Collectors, how many are Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians ?—We have a certain number of Indian Ticket Collectors in the A Grade out of a total of 112 ; I cannot tell you the exact number but I can find that out and can give it to the Commission.

K-2792. I want to know the number of European and Anglo-Indian Ticket Collectors in the B Grade ?—There are 10 Europeans and Anglo-Indians out of a total of 391.

K-2793. Of these ten how many are Europeans and how many are Anglo-Indians ?—I do not know.

K-2794. I would like you to get that information ?—Yes.

*Mr. Gregory* : In connection with Mr. Joshi's question, will it not be advisable to get a list of recent recruitment so that we can know how the recruitment is going on ?

K-2795. *The Chairman* : That is what I was thinking about. The best thing would be to get figures for a period of years. We were informed by the Railway Board quite clearly that at one time there was, for certain reasons, racial discrimination and that some years ago the policy was altered. We have been given to understand that there is no such discrimination at present although the effects of previous discrimination are still to be seen naturally in the service ?—That is so.

*Mr. Gregory* : As the G. I. P. Railway became a State Railway only a few years ago, it would be much better if information was given for the last six years, divided into periods of two years, because that would show more clearly whether there was any inclination to eliminate racial discrimination in the recruitment.

K-2796. *The Chairman* : Can you give us that information grouped into periods of two years ?—Yes.

K-2797. *Mr. Joshi* : We were told by the union representatives that in the matter of medical relief also there is some distinction ; they said that there are different colours of paper for writing prescriptions for Indians and Europeans. I have heard of this complaint more than once and I want to know why different colours of paper are used in the case of Indians and Europeans ?—(*Dr. Stallard*) : It is perfectly true that colour papers are used. The reason for that is to facilitate easy classification of people into different communities, like Hindus, Muhammadans, Christians, Parsis and so on. There is no idea of racial discrimination as such.

K-2798. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : How many colour papers you have ?—We have, I think, a blue paper, a red paper, a brown paper, a white paper and a yellow paper.

K-2799. *Mr. Joshi* : It is also complained that senior assistant medical officers attend to Europeans while juniors attend to Indians ?—People are put in charge purely in rotation.

K-2800. You have got a number of types of houses for your employees. Will you tell us which of these types are for Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians ?—(*Mr. Burn*) : Before the question of racial discrimination was raised the E type was being built for Indians. But now we have done away with that type so far as new types of houses are concerned ; of course, we cannot demolish the existing E type houses, but we are not building any more of that type.

K-2801. I want you to give us figures showing how many Indians, how many Europeans and how many Anglo-Indians occupy these different types of houses ?—If the Royal Commission thinks it worthwhile to have that information I can get it for them.

K-2802. We want to see whether there is no racial distinction in practice. You state that there is no racial distinction while your employees say that there is racial distinction. We want to get at the fact ?—We are doing away with racial distinction as fast as we possibly can. These E type quarters were at one time specially built for Indians.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : I do not think that can give us any information. The better types of quarters are given to men in senior grades who are admittedly not Indians at the moment.

*Mr. Joshi* : But we can find out whether during the last 3, 4 or 5 years the Government of India's promise that there will be no racial distinction is kept up.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : I think it is only two years ago that the Government of India made that promise.

*Mr. Joshi* : The then Member for Railways, Sir Charles Innes made that promise five or six years ago.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : Even then how could it apply to this railway which became a State railway only two years ago ?

*Mr. Joshi* : If we find that during the last five years nothing has been done it will be a matter for our consideration.

*The Chairman* : I think, Mr. Joshi, you better let me have a note so that I can see what exactly you require, and then I will decide whether we can call for any information.

*Mr. Joshi* : I have already made it clear what I want ; you can decide whether to call for the information or not. With regard to apprentices, can you let us know how many Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians are in A and B Grades ?—We can get that information.

K-2804. *Mr. Asavle* : Do you think that the present scales of wages to your menial servants in the engineering department are adequate for the maintenance of the worker and his family ?—I think, generally speaking, they are adequate. But so far as certain staff are concerned I have made proposals to the Railway Board to increase the pay of men under Rs. 15.



K-2805. Do you think that a man getting only Rs. 16 or 17 can maintain himself and his family in the city of Bombay ?—I think he can.

K-2806. Have you provided these men with free housing accommodation ?—Some of them get free quarters.

K-2807. But those men who do not get free quarters, can they live on Rs. 16 a month ?—I think they can. There is a point to be considered in connection with this and that is that in addition to their pay they get grain compensation.

K-2808. I think it is a very small amount. Including the grain compensation that is given, do you think that it is enough for the maintenance of a man, his wife and two children ?—I consider it is enough.

K-2809. Suppose he is not provided with free accommodation what rent has he to pay ?—I do not know.

K-2810. Can he get a place for less than Rs. 5 ?—I do not know.

K-2811. I think the G. I. P. Railway have hired development *chawls* for their servants ?—We have no development *chawls*.

K-2812. At Naigam some *chawls* have been hired by the railway ?—We have not hired any of these *chawls* for our menials.

K-2813. It may be for the menials or for the police—I do not know. What rent do you pay to the development department *chawls* ?—We do not pay them any rent.

K-2814. Suppose he has to pay Rs. 5 rent, will this amount of Rs. 16 be sufficient even for a single man in the city of Bombay ?—I do not agree that he pays a rent of Rs. 5.

K-2815. You state in your memorandum under paragraph, “ Where men are not given railway quarters ” : “ Living conditions vary with the locality. In Bombay considerable facilities exist owing to the activities of the local authorities and private enterprise, but overcrowding, however, is common, and it is feared that the lower paid staff live under conditions inferior to those who live in railway quarters, and they pay excessive rents for the accommodation they occupy ”. You admit here that they have to pay excessive rents and still you say that you do not know what rent they pay. Which of these statements is correct ?—Both are correct.

K-2816. From your memorandum I find that you have incurred a capital cost of Rs. 2,07,408 on primary schools for the education of children of European and Anglo-Indian employees and that the total expenditure incurred by the administration during the year 1928-29 in that behalf was Rs. 78,134. Are you giving similar facilities to Indian schools ?—Yes ; we give subsidies to Indian schools in certain places.

K-2817. I am referring only to Bombay ?—We give no facilities for any outside school, either European, Anglo-Indian or Indian, in the city of Bombay.

K-2818. *Mr. Gregory* : The G. I. P. Railway Staff Union on Saturday last mentioned about the Manmad Agreement which you made with the workers in 1919. There is no mention of that Agreement in your memorandum. Can you tell us whether it includes the various increases paid to the staff during the years 1914 and 1920 ?—(*Mr. Wood*) : It covers the

question of increases ; but the increases received between 1914 and 1919 are in addition to the wages given in those scales.

K-2819. But it takes into consideration all the various increases ?—Yes.

K-2820. I think it would be useful if you could supply a few copies of the Agreement to the Commission ?—Yes, I shall do that.

K-2821. Under that Agreement when did the actual rise come into force ?—From 1st April 1919.

K-2822. Not in the latter half of 1920 ?—No.

K-2823. Your memorandum does not give anywhere the compensatory allowances paid to subordinates. It is therefore difficult to understand the statement made by the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association in their memorandum. Can you tell the Commission whether any compensatory allowance is given to subordinates living in Bombay ?—(*Mr. Burn*) : 10 per cent. house allowance and 10 per cent. special local allowance are given to those whose salaries are Rs. 50 and under ; and 10 per cent. and 5 per cent. are given to those whose salaries are over 50 but under Rs. 200.

K-2824. Can you give the minimum pay of an officer ?—Rs. 300.

K-2825. In reading the memorandum of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association I found it difficult to understand a statement made by them in regard to what they call ' over-time '. I understand that you have definite rules on this matter. Can you let us have a copy of the rules ?—(*Mr. Gordon-Gray*) : Yes, here it is.

K-2826. In their memorandum they mention a definite mileage done by a mail Driver, namely, 2,640 miles at 110 miles a day, and they calculate that the Driver gets only 16.4 pies per mile. In this connection, is it a fact that a Driver if he does not do 2,640 miles in a month, has a deduction made from his basic pay ?—No, he gets his usual pay.

K-2827. If he does more than 2,640 miles in a month does he get additional pay for every mile ?—Yes, 16.4 pies per mile.

K-2828. To do 2,640 miles does it take more than 24 days ?—Not necessarily ; roughly, I should say you can do it in about 18 days.

K-2829. Therefore 110 miles is a small run per day ?—Yes.

K-2830. What is the average run that a mail Driver can do ?—From 150 to 200 miles.

K-2831. With regard to staff councils, we were told on Saturday that they were prohibited from bringing up any question affecting pay and hours of work. I should like to know if that is the case ?—(*Mr. Burn*) : That is not the case. The prohibition simply extends to bringing up questions of pay of individuals. Hours of work are discussed and general questions of pay are also discussed.

K-2832. Is it one of the objects of the staff councils to discuss questions affecting pay and hours of work ?—In the ' Functions ' of the staff council, the following rule appears : " To consider any matters of interest to their Divisions and to make recommendations to Divisional or District

Officers with regard to those that affect them, subject to the right of the railway council to veto any recommendation if it be found to involve the interests of other Divisions or Districts, or be in the opinion of the Railway Council, objectionable." Though it is not stated here that that is a subject that comes within their functions, yet it is one that is discussed.

K-2833. *Colonel Gidney* : We were told by a representative of the G. I. P. Staff Union that it was a usual occurrence for an Anglo-Indian or European Ticket Collector to become a first grade Station Master within five years. Is that so ?—I say it is absurd.

K-2834. How long does it take an Anglo-Indian or European Ticket Collector of ordinary intelligence to become a first grade Station Master ?—It is impossible for me to say off-hand.

K-2835. Would it take 20 years ?—I do not know.

K-2836. Do your present A Grade Station Masters average 20 years' service ?—Probably they do.

K-2837. Am I correct in stating that there is no racial discrimination in the loco department of your Railway ?—There is no racial discrimination.

K-2838. There are A, B and C Grades, selection to which is dependent on educational qualification ?—On educational qualification, physical fitness, mental alertness, and a number of other things.

K-2839. If one of your servants is dismissed or discharged, or dies, how long does it take your Railway to settle up his provident fund and other dues ?—It depends on the circumstances.

K-2840. Shall we say about three months ?—About a month.

K-2841. When a man dies, or is dismissed or discharged, an order is given to the family to quit his quarters. How long notice do you give ? It is generally ten days ?—We give them time to clear out of the quarters in reasonable comfort. We do not go at once and deliberately turn them out of the house directly the man has died. There is no hard and fast rule as to the length of notice given.

K-2842. Would you be agreeable to allow the dependants of the deceased, or of the discharged or dismissed servant, to remain in the quarters until the provident fund and other matters have been settled up ?—If the matter were put to me I would give it sympathetic consideration.

K-2843. Do you collect all subscriptions for the various activities which are in existence on the railway, such as the mutual benefit society, death benefit funds, and so on, from the pay sheets ?—That is so.

K-2844. You also deduct in this way amounts due to the stores, and you deduct the institute subscriptions ?—Yes.

K-2845. Then why should you object to deducting railway union and association subscriptions in the same way ?—Because I do not think it would be desirable.

K-2846. Do you make it a practice on your Railway to have upper subordinates officiating as officers on very poor pay for many years ?—No I do not think they do officiate on very poor pay.

K-2847. Contrasting the case of an official who comes from England with that of an officer who is a promoted subordinate, is not there a difference of double the pay, or one-third the pay, in favour of the former ?—If a subordinate acts as an officer for more than a year he gets the increase pertaining to that particular grade. If he acts for two years he gets a further increase. He keeps rising up in the scale while he is acting. He does not remain at the minimum rate of pay.

K-2848. But he does not get the same pay as the official who comes from England ?—It depends on how long he has been acting.

K-2849. Would you call that honest economy ?—I think it is a very excellent thing for the subordinate to have the opportunity of acting as an officer. It gives him opportunities of advancement which, in the ordinary way, he probably would not get.

K-2850. *Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lallji* : You say you have supplied 19 per cent. of the subordinate employees on the G. I. P. Railway with houses. Do you think it necessary to supply more housing arrangements for the remaining percentage ?—I think that the house accommodation is not sufficient, and that more houses should be supplied.

K-2851. Why have you delayed doing anything in the matter ?—Because it is a matter of finance.

K-2852. You give some figures in your memorandum about the educational facilities provided. What contribution do you make towards primary education for the Indians ?—We have subsidized certain Indian schools at large centres of our population.

K-2853. I see that you spend nearly Rs. 2,07,000 on primary schools for Europeans and Anglo-Indians ?—That is the capital cost of the schools and not the annual cost.

K-2854. You have a scheme to help the children of deceased Europeans and Anglo-Indians. Why have you not a similar scheme for Indians ?—Indians are supplied with schools throughout the length and breadth of the country. There are vernacular schools in every town of any considerable size, whereas for the Europeans, unless special facilities were given, there would be no schools for them. Therefore the railway has subscribed to European schools to a greater extent than it has to Indian schools.

K-2855. You say that the G. I. P. Railway Union is badly conducted. What do you mean by “ badly conducted ” ?—I mean by “ badly conducted ” that the union makes impossible demands, and when these impossible demands are not conceded they say that the G. I. P. Railway is unsympathetic and harsh towards its employees. Another way in which it is badly conducted is that it is extremely abusive. I take decided exception to being described as an arch robber and thief and blood-sucker. That goes beyond legitimate comment.

*The Chairman* : You may take this comfort. We have already been told that a good many of these things are said by way of propaganda !

K-2856. *Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lallji* : You give the figure of absenteeism as being 17 per cent. What is the percentage of absenteeism the day after pay day ?—It rises slightly for a day or two after pay day.

K-2857. *Col. Russell* : We have had submitted to us in a memorandum sent in by the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Railway Association, various complaints with regard to tests for eye-sight, colour vision, and so on. The memorandum says : " I regret to state that the methods of visual examination are not properly carried out by Railway Medical Officers, who often entrust this important duty to their subordinates." What have you to say about that ?—(*Dr. Stallard*) : The rules on the point are perfectly precise. The statement you have quoted is not in accordance with the facts.

K-2858. The memorandum also says that except at a few railway stations Holmgren wool skeins are used for testing colour vision. Is this test still in force on the railway ?—Edridge Greens apparatus has been distributed to all our chief centres ; that is, say, to all our district medical officers. They are only empowered to examine the senior staff and to re-examine men whose fitness for continued service is in dispute.

K-2859. The Edridge Green method is in use in all places ?—No. It has not been employed hitherto by certain of the authorized chosen Assistant Surgeons who are empowered to examine certain classes of recruits.

K-2860. You use wool tests ?—The wool test has been in operation, and will very shortly be replaced throughout the system so far as possible.

K-2861. Is the age of 45 insisted upon as the age for allowing railway employees to wear glasses ?—There is no restriction on age except with respect to Class A, and there 40 is the minimum ; but I should like to qualify that by saying that on appeal cases—that is to say cases who, having been failed by the primary examiners, come up to me—often we do not insist as a rule upon any limitation there.

K-2862. The next point is that those who are subsequently found to be defective visually at ages varying from 25 to 40, are pronounced unfit for further service and discharged. It is thought that these cases should be considered with regard to benefits under the Workmen's Compensation Act. Can that be done ?—There seem to be two points—the question of their discharge and the question of their possible benefit under the Act. With regard to discharge the general statement is not true. With respect to the Act, I, as the medical officer, am hardly in a position to offer an opinion. It seems to be an actuarial point.

K-2863. In your opinion, would it not be advisable to give those members of the railway who are discharged the benefits under the Workmen's Compensation Act. Do you consider that the disability is due to service ?—By no means always ; it may be occasionally, and such men are treated as the case arises. (See my letter No. 21550-R., dated 6th December 1929.)

K-2864. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : What is the salary of a Deputy Agent and an Agent ?—The salary of an Agent is Rs. 3,500, and that of a Deputy Agent is Rs. 2,150.

K-2865. Have you as Agent, or have any of the gentlemen who are here with you, ever tried to bring up a family on Rs. 15 a month ?—I have not.

K-2866. You have stated that Rs. 15 a month is an adequate wage. On what do you base that ?—Wages are based generally on economic considerations, supply and demand, the nature and responsibilities of the work involved, the initial technical skill required, and so on.

K-2867. Let me take your first point—economic considerations. On what criterion do you base your statement that Rs. 15 a month is an adequate wage? Have you any facts or figures by which you can substantiate the statement that Rs. 15 a month is an adequate wage?—I have not any figures which show the cost of living.

K-2868. Do I take it that this is merely your personal opinion?—No, I should not say that. The wage which is fixed depends very much on the local conditions.

K-2869. I am talking about the economic character of the wage?—That is one of the economic factors—the wages current in the neighbourhood where the Rs. 15 is paid.

K-2870. You do not, therefore, make that statement of yours on the basis that it is an adequate living wage.—I am of opinion that it is an adequate living wage. At the same time I have not any figures which show the minimum wage on which a man can live.

K-2871. Yet it is your opinion that Rs. 15 a month is an adequate living wage?—That is so.

K-2872. Let me turn to your memorandum. You state therein that you have no system of fixing wages, nor any criterion in regard to a living wage. Can you explain to me on what basis you fix the minimum wages in the Parel Division, the Poona Division, the Bhusaval Division and the Nagpur Division?—As I say the wages in these different districts are very largely fixed by the prevailing wage in those districts.

K-2873. And on no other consideration?—I would not say that no other factor comes into it.

K-2874. Just look at your figures for the minimum wage at Bhusaval. It is Rs. 17 for a *mukadum* and Rs. 17-8-0 for a watchman. At Nagpur it is Rs. 19 for a *mukadum* and the same for a watchman. Do you not think it is up to you to standardize these wages?—I do not think standardization could be brought into effect because the conditions vary very much in the different districts on the line. Therefore different rates of pay have to be fixed for different districts.

K-2875. I notice that although you are paying a *mukadum* in Nagpur Rs. 2 more than you are paying him at Bhusaval, yet you are paying at both these places the same wage to the watchman?—Yes, that is a discrepancy.

K-2876. With regard to the redress of grievances of your railwaymen, I have here two statements, both signed by people who asked for interviews. In one case the reply is: "I see no reason to grant a personal interview." In the other case the reply is: "The matter has been referred to the Chief Transportation Superintendent and no good purpose will be served by an interview." In cases like these, is it the usual procedure to place the grievances before the staff council?—No.

K-2877. Do you think it is advisable that where a man feels aggrieved and is refused an interview, the matter should automatically be referred to the staff council?—No, I do not think so.

K-2878. Why ?—Because the staff councils are not for the purpose of dealing with individual grievances. We have other machinery for dealing with individual grievances.

K-2879. What is that machinery ?—If a man receives an order which he considers is not correct he has the right of appeal to the officer above the officer who passed the order.

K-2880. And the result is that when he asks for an interview he is told that no good purpose can be served ?—But the letter you refer to is addressed to me, is it not ?

K-2881. This letter is not to you ?—I cannot express any opinion as to whether it is a correct letter unless I know all the circumstances of the case.

K 2882. This letter is signed by J. P. Remington, Divisional Transportation Superintendent ?—I do not know the circumstances in which he signed it. If I knew all the circumstances of the case I would express an opinion as to whether he was right in refusing the interview or not.

K-2883. All I am suggesting is that perhaps it would avoid a good deal of misunderstanding between the men on one side and yourselves on the other, if some sort of machinery could be set up for the discussion and settlement of day to day grievances ?—We have this machinery.

K-2884. I mean apart from the machinery which you have at present ?—We have in addition to that a liaison officer, who visits shops at Matunga and Parel and he hears any grievance which the staff have to put before him. We have started in the Bhusaval District a Personnel Officer expressly for the purpose of interviewing people with grievances and of bringing the staff into closer touch with the administration. In a short time we shall have one of these Personnel Officers in the Bombay District, and if the experiment is successful we shall extend that still further.

K-2885. Would you be adverse to having joint committees set up, composed of your men on the one side and of the unions on the other ?—Yes ; because I think it would be detrimental to discipline to have the officers' orders reviewed by the staff, and I think the staff would bring no help in improving the level of justice. They would come to the enquiry biassed. They have no practice in weighing evidence or in arriving at decisions, and I think to introduce such a system, would be to affect discipline detrimentally and to do no good whatever to the staff.

K-2886. That is your opinion ?—It is my opinion based on experience of many years.

K-2886a. Is it based on your experience of similar organizations elsewhere ?—I have been 28 years in India so I have not very much experience of organizations elsewhere ; but I have read about these other organizations and discussed them with people.

K-2887. *Mr. Cliff* : May I take it the recognition of a union meant a changed attitude to the union ?—Before the unions were recognized they were not taken any notice of at all by the railway, so that it does mean an entire change of attitude.

K-2888. With regard to the working of that recognition, we have been given, in one of the Appendices from the G. I. P. Staff Union, the reply received from you. I understood you to say to the Chairman that the Deputy Agent dealt with staff matters?—His duties are not confined to staff matters.

K-2889. May I take it that the letter to which I refer is a correct copy, and is an indication of the kind of reply which is given to the union?—I should like to know what the letter is before I express an opinion.

K-2890. A communication was sent to you by the G. I. P. Staff Union following upon their conference, and you sent a reply to them after the lapse of three months?—May I say that they asked for a reply in their own letter, "within three months." The fact that a reply was sent in after the lapse of nearly three months reflects in no way upon the administration, because the Union themselves asked for a reply within three months. I do not think they have a grievance in that respect.

K-2891. I notice that a request is put forward in this letter. There is a reply received, after the expiration of three months asking for further information. Is that the usual way of conducting negotiations with the Union?—I did not get your question.

K-2892. May I take it that that is characteristic of the way in which the administration deal with the Union?—I may say that the Union said: "We shall be glad if you will reply within three months." and it was considered that if they got the reply within three months it was courteous and in no way harmful to the Union. If it had occurred to me that the Union would be hurt at not getting a reply earlier I would certainly have made endeavours to send a reply more quickly.

K-2893. Is that the way in which the staff councils operate? Do you take as long to settle questions on the staff councils?—Many of the questions put up by the staff councils have to be given consideration, and the final reply cannot be given for more than three months.

K-2894. Are you prepared, with regard to your staff councils, to accept the co-operation of a union in their establishment?—No. I am not prepared to have a union take any part in the staff councils as they are constituted at present.

K-2895. Why do you object?—There are difficulties in principle and there are difficulties in practice. In the first place, which union do you refer to; there are three.

K-2896. For the purpose of this question I will take all the unions?—The unions do not represent half of the staff. Why should the unions be put on the staff councils rather than the ordinary members of the staff.

K-2897. That was not my question. Would you be prepared to enter into co-operation with the unions for the establishment of staff councils?—I should not, for the reasons I gave to a previous Member.

K-2898. That was with regard to cases of discipline?—Yes.

K-2899. But with regard to other cases?—The unions have representation on the staff councils now, if their men happen to be elected as members of the divisional committees.



K-2900. What are the reasons why you should not co-operate with the unions in the establishment of staff councils ?—I wish to co-operate with the staff of the G. I. P. Railway as the whole staff and not with any particular union or unions.

K-2901. If the unions represent half the staff you are not prepared to allow half the staff to be represented through the trade unions ?—My point is this. If the staff elected union members to sit on the staff councils I am quite prepared to co-operate with those union members—not as union members but as members of the staff.

K-2902. For dealing with matters arising out of employment are you prepared to set up a standing joint machinery with the unions ?—I am not prepared to do that.

K-2903. Why ?—Give me some instances of matters arising out of employment.

K-2904. Take for instance their resolution dealing with fines and debits. They are making a representation to you ?—Yes.

K-2905. Then there is another resolution dealing with the appointment of qualified cabinmen to Guards' posts. There are many matters similar to that. In dealing with those matters are you prepared to set up a standing joint machinery with the unions ?—I am prepared to discuss those matters with the officers of the unions.

K-2906. But why are you not prepared to set up a standing joint machinery ?—I do not consider it is necessary. I think we have sufficient means of getting at the wishes of the staff by the present machinery. It is unnecessary to add to it.

K-2907. From the point of view of the Commission may I take it that you do not welcome the co-operation of the trade unions in the establishment of either staff councils or standing joint machinery ?—No, not at present.

K-2908. In answer to the Chairman I understood you to say that the staff on your Railway who are receiving Rs. 30 and under had no franchise for the establishment of staff councils. Is that so ?—Yes, that is so. They do not vote for the members of the divisional committees of the staff councils, nor sit on those bodies. I think the reason is : when the staff councils were started six or seven years ago it was felt that these people were not sufficiently advanced to be able to exercise their franchise with advantage or to sit on the councils.

K-2909. Would you be good enough to tell us the number of employees on your railway who are drawing Rs. 30 and under ?—Yes, I shall have the figures got out.

K-2910. In respect of employees over Rs. 30, it has been appreciated that there are matters arising out of employment upon which representations should be made.—Yes.

K-2911. But take the case of employees under Rs. 30, I understand you object to the unions having anything to do with appointments on staff councils or standing joint machinery. Then what protection do such people under Rs. 30 have ? Whom have they to defend their interests in matters arising out of their employment ?—Staff under Rs. 30 are limited to making representations to officers under whom they work.

K-2912. Have they no other opportunity of making representations ?

K-2913. *The Chairman* : Is there what you call a liaison officer ?—There is one liaison officer for Matunga and Parel. They can see him if they like and make representations. But I may say that since this officer was appointed in June 1928, only 49 people out of 7,000 employees have made use of his services. That is because the unions have deliberately set their faces against his being of any use.

K-2914. *Mr. Cliff* : That might be because you refused to recognize the unions for a good many years, and appointed your own staff councils. Now the Chairman referred to two liaison officers in certain shops. Is that the only opportunity that the lower paid staff has for representing grievances ?—The Personnel Officer of the Bhusaval Division and the Personnel Officer who will be appointed for the Bombay Division will also be available for attending to grievances.

K-2915. But is it for the whole staff ?—No, only for the two shops at Parel and Matunga, and the Transportation Department Staff of the division mentioned.

K-2916. Take the grade of gangmen and other station staff. Have they any liaison officer to whom they can make representations ?—No.

K-2917. Any labour officer ?—No.

K-2918. Therefore these people have no liaison officer and no representative on the staff councils ?—That is so.

K-2919. And you object to the unions representing their grievances and creating machinery for representing them ?—So far as these people on the line are concerned they have many opportunities to come in contact with their officers which are not enjoyed by the rest of the staff. An Engineer is continually trolleying over the section and he comes in contact with the coolies. They are able to represent matters to him in a way that in my opinion is quite satisfactory.

K-2920. You pointed out earlier that these people have opportunities of putting their grievances before the supervising officers. But now we are dealing with facilities apart from that.—But though they do not elect people on the divisional committees and do not sit on them, they are able to represent their case through members on the divisional committees. I understand that recently the question of supplying blankets to the permanent way staff was brought up before the divisional committee by one of the members and that it was granted. That is case in point where a member of the divisional committee, a Permanent-Way Inspector or other officer put up the case of these men under Rs. 30.

K-2921. If you think it worth while you might send us a record of the number of cases dealt with in respect of staff below Rs. 30.—Yes.

K-2922. Could you furnish us with a return of the increase in wages that has been given to the lower paid staff during the past two years and the total number of persons involved ?—Yes, I shall get a statement prepared.

K-2923. You make some general remarks on indebtedness in your memorandum. Have you any proposals to alleviate that state of indebtedness of the railway workers ?—We have started a co-operative credit society.

K-2924. What has been your experience in respect of that ?—It is largely availed of.

K-2925. We have a very interesting return from the B. B. and C. I. Railway showing what they have done to relieve the indebtedness of the workers. Is it possible for you to give us a similar return ?—I know what has been done by the B. B. and C. I. Railway at present. I have heard of it. We also started the same scheme on the G. I. P. Railway many years ago and we were so flooded with applications to conduct negotiations with the money-lenders that the scheme broke down. I am sorry that at present it is not in existence.

K-2926. Could you give a statement similar to the one given by them ?—Yes, I would do that.

K-2927. *Mr. Ahmed* : You say that passes will not be granted to officials of the union who are not railway employees. Again you say that complete freedom of action is given to the unions in certain respects. But why do you refuse to grant passes to officials of the union who are not railway employees ?—Because they are not entitled to passes if they are not railway servants.

K-2928. *The Chairman* : But do you give free passes to officials of any other association ?—No.

K-2929. *Mr. Joshi* : Do you not give passes to missionaries ?—I shall look up the records and find out how many passes were granted last year. If there are any I shall let the Commission have a statement.

K-2930. *Mr. Ahmed* : With regard to the provision of quarters to your employees I see that you provide more quarters for the higher paid staff who can easily get the type of quarters they live in, outside the railway. But you do not provide enough quarters for the lower paid staff who cannot easily get convenient and comfortable accommodation outside. Why do you not build more quarters for the lower paid men first instead of building quarters for the higher paid staff ?—With regard to the construction of quarters the difficulty is the question of getting money for building extra quarters.

K-2931. Do you license headmen or contractors to bring coolies to work at the stations on your railway ?—No, we do not give contract for the passenger coolies.

K-2932. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Reading your report I have been very much impressed by all that you have done for your staff. Apart from the wages and the various allowances, you have provided a Co-operative Credit Society which in the past has made advances amounting to 2½ crores ; you have also a Mutual Benefit Society, a Death Benefit Society ; you give building advances at cheap rates of interest. You have done more than most other employers. We still find that there is a good deal of discontent amongst the members of the staff, and one of the principal causes of discontent that I find is this insecurity of tenure as they call it—liability to discharge and dismissal. In your memorandum, you have given the number of persons “ discharged for offences ” during the year ended 31st March 1929. Does that include dismissals ?—It means dismissals and discharges for offences.

K-2933. You allow a right of appeal in the case of dismissals up to the Agent, and up to the Railway Board if necessary ?—That is so.

K-2934. Last year there were as many as 500 discharges and dismissals. How many actual cases of appeal against these were made to you last year ?—I can get out the figure ; I cannot tell you off-hand.

K-2935. Can you tell approximately ?—(*Mr. Wood*) : In about ten per cent. there were appeals.

K-2936. That means that there must be ninety men in every hundred who have been dismissed smarting under a grievance ?—(*Mr. Wood*) : I do not think they should necessarily be smarting under a grievance.

K-2937. Do you not think that it is possible to encourage the unions to state the case for appeal to you or to the Railway Board in cases of dismissals ?—(*Mr. Burn*) : I think this question of discharge and insecurity of service is a very burning question ; it is a question that does affect the staff very largely ; they always have the possibility of discharge hanging over them. If any means could be found of giving them greater security of service, I should be very glad to do what I could. The Railway Board has recently sent me orders on this question, in which they do give additional security against discharge. I shall read out to the Commission the terms of that order, because it is a matter of very great importance.

K-2938. *The Chairman* : Is it a long document ?—No. It reads : “ When an employee who has completed ten years of continuous service is charged with an offence of a serious character which merits discharge, a charge sheet shall be presented to him stating the nature and details of the charge, and he shall be required to submit a written explanation.” That is a new point which we never had before.

K-2939. *The Chairman* : Can we have that circular as one whole ?—Yes ; they are rules regarding dismissal and discharge of non-covenanted railway servants.

K-2940. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is the date ?—There is no date on it ; I received it about a fortnight ago.

K-2941. In the replies that you gave Mr. Cliff you did not approve of the unions dealing with individual cases ?—I do not approve of the unions interfering where a discharge has been ordered by the officer in charge.

K-2942. I am dealing with dismissals. You are not in favour of the union representing the worker's case ?—No.

K-2943. Do you not think it is unreasonable ?—I do not think so.

K-2944. The man has been dismissed ; as a rule he is illiterate, at any rate not very literate ; do you not think that it would be a great help to him if he could get his union to help him in setting out his appeal properly and if necessary to come up before you. In that way the workers would have the satisfaction of feeling that their appeals have been properly stated and properly considered ?—If they belong to a union, they can get their case written out by the union. That is the practice.

K-2945. You say you do not approve of it ?—I do not agree that my officers should meet the union officials and go into the case of discharge of

K-2924. What has been your experience in respect of that?—It is largely availed of.

K-2925. We have a very interesting return from the B. B. and C. I. Railway showing what they have done to relieve the indebtedness of the workers. Is it possible for you to give us a similar return?—I know what has been done by the B. B. and C. I. Railway at present. I have heard of it. We also started the same scheme on the G. I. P. Railway many years ago and we were so flooded with applications to conduct negotiations with the money-lenders that the scheme broke down. I am sorry that at present it is not in existence.

K-2926. Could you give a statement similar to the one given by them?—Yes, I would do that.

K-2927. *Mr. Ahmed* : You say that passes will not be granted to officials of the union who are not railway employees. Again you say that complete freedom of action is given to the unions in certain respects. But why do you refuse to grant passes to officials of the union who are not railway employees?—Because they are not entitled to passes if they are not railway servants.

K-2928. *The Chairman* : But do you give free passes to officials of any other association?—No.

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K-2945. You say you do not approve of it ?—I do not agree that my officers should meet the union officials and go into the case of discharge of

each and every individual. What I say is that the man can have his case put up by the union in the best way possible.

K-2946. You have no objection to the union drawing up the man's case ?—I have no objection to that.

K-2947. But you do not want the man or the union to discuss the matter with you ?—I do not want the union to discuss the matter with my officers.

K-2948. Leave out the union. A man has been dismissed ; can he not see you personally ?—No. He can if I agree to meet him ; he has no right to a personal interview with me.

K-2949. With whom has he a right of personal interview ?—He would see his immediate officer.

K-2950. That is, if he is discharged he has a right of appeal to the immediate officer. You do not differentiate between discharges and dismissals. I feel personally from what I have heard, that one of the main causes of disaffection amongst the railway workers is this insecurity of tenure. I have tried to discuss this question of giving a right of appeal and personal interview with others, and I find that you are (if I may say so) more unreasonable than others in this matter.—I agree that this is a great cause of discontent, and I think the matter should be considered. I want to get co-operation from the staff as a whole.

K-2951. If I may say so, you should take a reasonable attitude with regard to this matter. Why should you not appoint a Personnel Officer who can either see the man or his representative, instead of dealing with mere paper appeals ?—We have done that ; we have appointed a Personnel Officer on the Bhusaval Division for this very purpose.

K-2952. Do you allow the man, if he so desires, to come to the Personnel Officer in person ?—Yes.

K-2953. Do you allow him to come with an officer of his union, if he so desires, in front of the Personnel Officer ?—No ; we have no union officials interviewing the Personnel Officer in company with the people who have grievances to represent or who have been dismissed.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

In connection with the oral evidence given by the representatives of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, the following replies were sent in by the **PRINCIPAL MEDICAL AND HEALTH OFFICER OF THE RAILWAY** to written questions by Colonel Russell.

K-2954. *Col. Russell* : Is adequate provision made for the housing of staff, particularly low-paid staff ? What sort of quarters are provided and what is the cubic space per occupant allowed ?—

- (a) It is probable that adequate provision is not made for the housing of low-paid staff ; I mean there are not sufficient dwellings available for low-paid staff. This aspect of the question is, however, one that only indirectly affects my department and then only in so far as I believe that in general the housing and sanitation that we provide is better than that elsewhere procurable by Indians of the same status,

so that, accordingly we are entitled to expect that the general physical level of staff would be benefited by providing accommodation for a higher proportion of staff.

(b) *With regard to the hygienic value of the quarters* that we do provide for our low paid staff, it would be best to consider first the type provided for labour drawing Rs. 30 and under, i.e., the "K" type of our standard designs.

1. The siting of our buildings is carefully considered and in general good.
2. The structural design insures a weathertight building.
3. The sanitation of the areas with regard to drainage, and general scavenging is provided for, and adequate supplies of potable water are available.

In all these matters I consider that the level of housing in our premises is indisputably higher than that available in most areas to the same class of labour beyond our fences.

4. The unit consists of (1) a room with floor area  $10 \times 12$  ft. and a ridge roof at 10 ft. 6 in. giving a total cubic capacity of 1,004 c. ft. and (2) a verandah and cook-house with a total joint cubic capacity of 365 c. ft.; and, common to continuous units of which a block may comprise 10, are (1) an ample enclosed court yard and (2) washing places, and 4 bath rooms, 2 for men and 2 for women.

The adequacy of space in this class of dwelling should be judged in relation to the average number of occupants. We have no precise census of staff families available. Making a provisional assumption of four members to the family, the space allowed is less than the ideal and more than the actual generally available to the class of labour elsewhere than in our premises. The floor-and-cubic-space allowed for each person in the dwelling rooms of our own units, on the assumption of four members to the family, and that admitted or suggested under certain bye-laws current shows that we probably stand in a midway position between the ideal and the minima admissible.

	<i>Floor space.</i>		<i>Cubic space.</i>
Railway Type "K" .. ..	30		251
Turners "Sanit. in India" ("reasonable accommodation in Indian cities") ..	25		250
L. G. B. Model Bye-laws (common lodging house sleeping rooms) .. ..			300
id. day-and-night rooms .. ..			400
Factory Act, non-textile .. ..			250
Merchant Shipping Act, Cabins .. ..			120
Public Elementary Schools (Eng.) ..	8		80

The ideal standard for dwelling is put at 1,000 c. ft. It is, I think important, however, in assessing the sufficiency of the space we provide to make allowances for the additional area of our verandahs and the enclosed court-yards which are generally used to sleep out in during a considerable portion of the year. It would for example be improper, I think, to compare on the basis of space available in living rooms our "K" type



quarters with many-storeyed *chawls* where the same additional amenities are usually not available.

There are four further standard types of quarters which are occupied by employees whose pay ranges from Rs. 90 to Rs. 249. The cubic space provided by the smallest of these types, which is a 2 room unit, is not far short of twice that provided in the "K" type. All this series may be regarded as insuring sufficient space, and all are structurally good dwellings.

K-2955. What facilities exist in workshops and elsewhere, but particularly in the former, for bathing and washing? And what provisions for latrines are made? What arrangements exist for the removal of night soil?—

(a) *Special facilities such as wash-houses are not provided in the manner I believe required in England as part of the equipment of shops. It is in my opinion improbable, were they provided, that they commend themselves to our staff. There are in or about shops tiffin sheds and elsewhere taps and stand pipes which are used for washing. Washing places or bathrooms are portion of the present standard designs of quarters.*

(b) *Method of removal vary from place to place. At large in our colonies, it is on the hand removal system. At certain places as at the Matunga shops septic tank receive the night soil directly from latrines.*

K-2956. Have you statistics on the incidence of sickness among staff? Do you regard these statistics as a reliable index of actual sickness, or may they not, for example, be invalidated by the possible failure to record occasions of sickness when the employee instead of "signing sick" takes casual leave?—

(a) *We have statistics that show, under the classification required for the purposes of Sanitary Commissioner with the Government of India, all cases of illness and injury treated by our own medical staff or certified by us. Classification has been elaborated further in our own administrative reports so that we are now in a position to give detailed returns on, e.g.,—*

(1) *Total sickness month by month throughout the year in the three recognized salary-grades.*

(2) *Lost days due to certified sickness in each grade and approximate cost of sickness to the administration.*

(3) *Numbers of patients treated for the chief diseases as outdoor and as indoor patients, whether staff, families of staff or general public.*

(4) *Surgical operations performed on staff or public, etc.*

(b) *On the whole we regard our statistics as a tolerably reliable index of real sickness. We believe that in our larger stations very few staff who are ill, fail to notify the fact. In certain sections and at certain places where a considerable proportion of the staff reside at a distance from the place of work, as at Igatpuri where they may live in villages some miles from the line and across hills, men do, on occasions, absent themselves when genuinely ill without reporting themselves*

as such. It is probably not possible to arrive at a wholly reliable figure that would give the error introduced by this cause into our returns, but we think that a very liberal allowance for this error would be 15-20 per cent.; by this I mean that, at most, our gross return of lost days due to sickness might be increased by 15-20 per cent. The correction would fall to be mostly made in the lowest paid group; it is probable that an insignificant error exists in our returns relating to subordinates in the salary-group Rs. 250 and over.

K-2957. What is the incidence of malaria amongst your staff and families of staff? What does this figure mean? What do you think is the total of "lost days" due to malaria? What measures to combat or control malaria do you carry out? Do you maintain any special staff for anti-malarial work?—

- (a) (i) In the year 1927-28 the incidence of malaria amongst staff was returned as 29.24 per cent., in the year 1928-29 as 19.54 per cent.; corresponding to 23,788 and 33,252 "cases" respectively: we ascribe the difference in these figures partly to general epidemiological conditions and partly to the introduction of methods insuring more accurate diagnosis. There is a tendency, probably not peculiar to railway medical service, to overload malarial returns by referring fever-cases to malarial infection when due to other causes. We now require that a case to be recorded as malarial should conform to certain clinical criteria: in the majority of all cases a blood examination is now carried out: some 1,400 laboratory examinations for malaria were carried out in the past year.
- (ii) We have also returns for staff families. We have, however, no census of staff families and our figures are accordingly only gross. The total cases returned last year were 6,853.
- (b) The figures for incidence that I have given represent the total recorded "cases" per 100 of staff. Since the same man may be re-entered as a "new case" more than once in the year, it follows that, for this reason alone if no others, the figures cannot be read as indicating the percentage of our staff, who have suffered from malaria in a given year. We have no figures that would supply this information. If such figures were taken out those that I have given would without doubt much overstate the actual position.
- (c) We carry out various classes of measures in control of malaria. I should class these as:—
  - (i) measures undertaken, under the advice of my department or otherwise, by the Engineering Department in drainage, clearing, and levelling of sites. Sites for new buildings are passed by my department before building is undertaken and our sanitary staff and Health Assistants are expected to report on defects of drainage at all times when in the course of their inspections these are noticed.
  - (ii) Systematic search for breeding places of anophelines, and their treatment. The clinical record of all malarial cases are now passed on to our sanitary side and a special form (M. 40F) is employed to include a report on the locality

in which the man affected resides, on possible local breeding places, on the species of mosquito, if any, found infesting the site.

- (iii) Controlled diagnosis and treatment.
- (iv) We have no definite information on "lost days" due to malaria alone. We have information on the total of lost days ascribable to sickness in general but have not hitherto classified the loss against diseases severally.
- (v) We maintain for anti-malarial work alone one "anti-malarial overseer" and 15 "anti-malarial coolies". This, however, I think I am entitled to add, would give a false impression of the staff of the sanitary side engaged in anti-malarial work. We employ now 5 Health Assistants (Bombay, Bhusaval, Jubbulpore, Nagpur and Sholapur) whose duties are largely concerned with malarial survey work and the direction of anti-malarial measures: they are all qualified men and all hold the D. P. H.

K-2958. Have you arrangements for first-aid assistance? Where do you maintain first-aid posts? How are they located in shops?—

(a) *We have arrangements for first aid assistance.*—First aid equipments are maintained:

1. In shops, running sheds and loco-sheds, and in the offices of certain Station Masters; equipments of this type (Contents in Annex.) number 53 (Distribution and charge in Annex.).
2. On passenger trains; 237 first-aid boxes of this pattern have been distributed (Contents in Annex.).
3. Two Permanent Way Inspectors for the use of their gangs; of these about 76 have been distributed.
4. Supplementary equipment to stations, marshalling-yards, workshops and running sheds are now under consideration, the number to be immediately supplied under this heading will be 220.

(b) *First-aid training of staff* is systematically carried out in accordance with the scheme of the St. John's Ambulance Association. During last year 64 first-aid classes were held and 717 employees attended for instruction of whom 349 passed in 'First-Aid'; 19 for Vouchers; 5 for Medallion and 3 for Label. We had by the end of last year 2,453 employees trained in 'First-Aid Methods'. Rs. 3,748 were expended on training during the year.

K-2959. If a Government supported Sickness Insurance scheme were introduced in what way do you think that its effectiveness would be impaired or influenced by epidemics such as malaria or cholera or plague?—I have insufficient data to form an opinion on this subject. *Prima facie* I should be inclined to believe that our knowledge of epidemics, particularly our ability to forecast their periodicity, extent and gravity, is not yet sufficiently advanced to establish a sound actuarial basis for a scheme of this sort in this country.

K-2960. Do you consider that there are valid grounds for not accepting, for purposes of sick leave and the like, the certificates of unattached medical practitioners?—Yes; if your question relates to the unconditional

surrender to unattached medical practitioners of powers of control and revision now exercised by the railway administration. Actually we do admit under safeguards and certain circumstances, certificates from such sources in relation to sick certification of staff. I believe that it would be most detrimental to withdraw these safeguards and that it would lead to great wastage of public money if we accepted unconditionally the certificates of unattached practitioners to cover periods of absence from duty.

In regard to the certification of recruits and staff as fit for duty in railway service, I think the argument in favour of retaining specially attached medical staff who are the servants of the administration as the sole arbiters is incontrovertible. So far as I am aware this is the practice everywhere, certainly in England, Germany, France, Switzerland, Belgium, and the U. S. A. The principal reason is that in order to say that a man is fit for a given sort of duty, it is necessary not only to know the physical and mental state of the man himself, but to possess a tolerably accurate knowledge of the physical and mental demands of the work. This latter involves close continuous touch with the actualities of railway practice.

K-2961. Do you consider your medical provisions adequate ?—

- (a) I consider that broadly our medical provisions are adequate. I should like however to qualify this. In the first place this appreciation is grounded on a certain view of the functions of the Medical Department which may or may not be modified as time proceeds as part of more general changes of policy ; in the second place as medical technique advances, and particularly as our staff increasingly desire to avail themselves of what we can give in western medicine existing provisions should be broadened. So long as Railway Medical Departments here exist, as now constituted, to provide treatment—in this differing from Medical “ Departments ”, *e.g.*, on English Railways they are likely to remain capable of improvement in detail and are so far “ inadequate ”.
- (b) I take it that the present question does not relate to the strictly sanitary side of our work.
- (c) Subject to the above, I think that on the one hand we employ adequate personnel, both in numbers and qualification, and on the other, that our provision of hospitals and equipments is satisfactory, and finally, that our dispositions for rendering the services of both available to staff are sufficient.
- (d) *With regard to personnel*, the Medical Department comprise on its clinical side, in addition to the Chief Medical Officer whose work is only administrative,

District Medical Officers	..	..	..	11
Assistant Medical Officers	..	..	..	2
Senior Assistant Surgeons	..	..	..	3
Assistant Surgeons	..	..	..	19
Senior Sub-Assistant Surgeons	..	..	..	4
Sub-Assistant Surgeons	..	..	..	32
or a total of 71 qualified men.				

As the total railway staff is about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs, the average number of staff per qualified medical attendant is approximately 1,700. We employ, in addition to a matron in charge at our Byculla Hospital, 28 nurses or nursing sisters, 49 compounders, 33 clerks, a drug inspector and 192 menials.

- (e) *With regard to Hospitals and Dispensaries* provisions under this head comprise 8 district hospitals and 33 dispensaries. District hospitals are situated at the larger centres of our population ; at them District Medical Officers are posted and from their offices, sectional medical arrangements are controlled. Policy has been to concentrate on the development of these central district hospitals where beds are provided for indoor treatment and nurses posted ; they are now provided with clinical laboratories and will in the near future be provided with X-ray equipments. As far as possible we look to handle at these centres our major surgical work and to admit patients whose condition requires closely supervised treatment in bed. Our dispensaries are equipped to treat staff as out-patients and to deal with lesser surgical work ; we do not here usually make provision for the admission of inpatients, though the equipment provides for the admission of cases in emergency. The staff attached to dispensaries visit and treat sick staff confined to bed at their own homes within a prescribed radius and at sectional stations. The families of staff are entitled to free treatment as out-patients at all our hospitals and dispensaries, and are treated at their own homes at fixed rates and may be admitted as in-patients when space allows, that is when the recognizedly primary function of hospitals as places for the treatment of staff is not interfered with thereby. We have no special provision at the present time for the admission of women, save at Jhansi ; there is however a tentative scheme for this at our central hospital at Byculla where we hope to render space now occupied by our nursing staff available for the purpose by the building of a special Nursing Hostel.

K-2962. It has been suggested by Staff Union witnesses that the examination conducted on the districts to ascertain whether staff are fit to continue to serve are too rigorous : it has been brought forward in support of this that a good many employees failed by District Examiners have been passed when re-examined in your office. Can you tell us how this comes about ?—Our authorized examiners on the districts are instructed to adhere rigidly to the letter of the standards of physical fitness, that we prescribe for each class of operative. It has been judged that if latitude to depart from the rigid observance of the standard were allowed, this would tend to be unfair to staff as effectively resulting in different standards being enforced on different sections of the line. Accordingly, any departure from standard is regarded as cause for rendering a man unfit at the examinations conducted by our district examiners. But wide opportunity is allowed to staff rejected to appeal to my office when each case is carefully reviewed, not only in the light of the District Examiner's report, but with full consideration of other circumstances. A very considerable proportion of all these reviews are undertaken in regard to defects in eye sight.

Now such departures from standard have very various significance in different cases. The man may have a small corrigible error of refraction which with glasses can be put right ; such a man if his record is that of a good careful trustworthy worker will be passed, perhaps subject to re-examination at somewhat shorter intervals than would otherwise have been the case. His defect may be due to a commencing cataract : in such a man the district decision would usually be supported. It may be due to a possibly remediable inflammatory condition of the optic nerve : decision in such a case would be deferred pending treatment. It may be due to transitory conditions, stationary conditions or conditions liable to progression : to conditions remediable or irremediable ; and it is in my office, or on occasion at my request by outside experts, that the precise evaluation of the condition, whatever it be, is judged in relation to the man's occupation. I think it is evident that the comparative frequency of revisions on appeal cannot reflect upon the care with which examinations are conducted by District Examiners.

K-2963. It has been said by Staff Union witnesses that cholera, smallpox and eye diseases are common among staff and staff families. What is your experience ?—The Union's statements are ill founded.

(a) "Cholera".—Something over 100 cases have occurred in 2 years, giving a staff incidence of about 0.04 per cent. per annum.

(b) "Smallpox".—Something over 250 cases in 2 years have occurred as an annual incidence of about 0.1 per cent.

We have no precise census figures at present for families but on the basis of 3 additional members of family per head of staff, this gives a respective incidence of 0.01 per cent. and 0.025 in our populations : clearly these diseases cannot be described as "common". Free vaccination is given and urged : during the occurrence of cholera in epidemic form, elaborate protective measures are set on foot and it may be confidently said that under such circumstances the Railway Committees are *vis a vis* the general civil population in a favoured position.

(c) "Malaria"—is admittedly prevalent with an incidence of 19.54 per cent. amongst employees. Systematic treatment and prophylaxis is practical and considerable sums are spent in drainage and anti-malarial work generally. In certain districts the staff incidence is not a measure of our own sanitary protection but of the sanitary level of the adjoining areas over which we do not hold control.

(d) "Eye-diseases"—ocular diseases are not common amongst staff. Ocular injury is frequent as in all kindred undertakings. (In two years 1908-1910, 390 operatives lost the sight of one eye wholly on the Railway systems owing  $\frac{1}{2}$  the U. S. A. roads from workshop accidents only, etc., etc.). "Safety First Committees" are investigating means of reducing incidence and the Medical Department has on foot an enquiry correlating certain forms of injury and special occupations with a view to suggestions.

K-2964. Can you tell us what percentage of applicants for appointments are rejected on grounds of physical unfitness ?—During the year

terminating 31st March 1929, 17,294 men offering themselves for service were examined by us. Of these 14,196 passed into the service and 3,098 failed for one cause or another, *i.e.*, approximately 18 per cent. About 83.7 per cent. of the failures were due to inability to attain the requisite standards of vision.

K-2965. Can you tell us how many men already in the service of the railway are annually examined and discharged on the grounds of physical unfitness?—The total numbers examined in 1927-29 were 17,023 or at an average 8,512 for the year.

The total passed in these years was 14,536 ; the total failed by primary examiners 2,487 or about 14.5 per cent.

During 1928-29, 412 employees declared unfit by primary examiners were re-examined on appeal by my office : 65 were rejected for any service, 115 were passed for service, but not in the work they formerly discharged, and 232 were confirmed in their prior employment.

In 1928-29, then, 6,103 were examined and after the consideration of all appeals to my office 5,501 were passed as fit for service and 602 discharged as unfit or about 9.8 per cent.

K-2966. It has been said by Staff Union witnesses examined by the Commission that the medical examination of recruits and employees is ill conducted as it has been usual for medical officers to delegate the work of examination to subordinates. Have you any information on this subject?—The regulations in force are definite as to who should conduct these examinations and I have no information that would lead me to believe that they are not being duly observed. The regulations current provide as follows :—

- (a) All candidates for engagement in classes A1 and A2 irrespective of the pay of the post sought, and all candidates for engagement in posts carrying a salary of Rs. 150 or upwards in classes B1 and B2 must be examined by District Medical Officers. All candidates for engagement in classes C1 and C2 may be examined by "Selected Assistant Surgeons" and also candidates for classes B1 and B2 when the salary of the post sought does not exceed Rs. 150.
- (b) Employees, *i.e.*, men already in the service when re-examined at the time prescribed to ascertain their continued fitness are examined according to the same rule, subject to the reservation that adverse certificates such as if given effect to, would entail an employees discharge from the service or from the grade he has hitherto occupied in the service, cannot be issued until the employee has been submitted for confirmatory examination by the District Medical Officer.

The "Selected Assistant Surgeons" referred to are either men who have special school training in ophthalmology or are old and reliable railway doctors.

Employees discharged or removed from the grade formerly occupied have full opportunities of appeal to my office which are practically never refused. Here they are seen personally by me, or, as the circumstances appear to indicate examined by a Medical Board convened under my orders or referred for supplementary reports by specialists prior to decision by me.

K-2967. Colonel Gidney desires me to refer to you a question he had hoped for opportunity himself to ask you. He is informed that colour vision testing is not adequately carried out, that for example, Holmgren's wools are still in use whereas he himself would desire to see Edridge-Green's Lantern employed. Would you let me know what tests for colour vision are now used?—The Edridge-Green Lantern is now used at all our District Headquarters. If I may refer you to the answer to your last question, you will see that it is accordingly in use for the classes of recruits in whom the possession of colour vision is of chief importance and further that no employee would now be rejected for further service on other colour vision test than that provided by the Edridge-Green Lantern. Authorized Assistant Surgeons are now using either hand signal lamps of the standard pattern or Holmgren's wools. Colonel Gidney will be aware that the problem of the proper lighting of the Edridge-Green Lantern is not easily solved. So fast as these difficulties are surmounted we propose to introduce these lamps generally. The Edridge-Green Lamp is also the decisive test in my office when cases submitted for appeal are considered though often supplemented by Ishihara's Pseudoisodiramaic plates. Nagel's lamps as formerly used on the German State lines, Schiotz later flash lamp, the old Holmgren wools (somewhat reinstated I suggest in their old authority by some later workers), the Masselon scales and a contrivance of Hess. I may say that we do not think we have yet the ideal apparatus and that such remains to be invented.

K-2968. Colonel Gidney also desires me to refer to the question of the use of spectacles by staff. He understands that staff are not permitted the use of glasses under 45 ; is this so?—This is not so. We do not, save most unusually where special circumstances appear to render this desirable, admit recruits in classes A1, A2, A3 and B1 who require glasses to bring their vision to the standard prescribed. Recruits in B2, C1 and C2 are admitted with glasses.

With regard to those in the service who at re-examination fail with the naked eye, to attain standard we do not debar glasses, (provided that the naked eye vision does not fall below a certain minimum), in any class at any age with one exception : namely, we do not admit glasses in Class A1 under 40. I am speaking here of the provisions as they relate to District Examiners. In reply to a former question, I have referred to the latitude assumed by my office to set aside in certain cases even this restriction.

K-2969. Colonel Gidney suggests that men who have come into the service with normal vision but who are later, that is at subsequent examinations, found to have defective sight should be compensated under the Workmen's Compensation Act. Is this your view?—The question I submit cannot be answered categorically. I gather that Colonel Gidney implies that such depreciation is necessarily due to occupational risks incurred in service. This cannot obviously cover all cases, as railway workers no less than others, are liable to such ocular defects as, *e.g.*, ensue from syphilis or other infections or senile changes. Where the visual depreciation is manifestly traceable to occupational risk, I am in full agreement that such cases should come under the Workmen's Compensation Act. In a large proportion of such cases, they already do so.



## (RAILWAYS)

## Sixty-Seventh Meeting

(PANEL NO. 1.)

CALCUTTA.

Monday, 3rd February, 1930.

## PRESENT :

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E. ( <i>Presiding</i> ).	
Mr. G. D. BIRLA, M.L.A.	Diwan CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.
Mr. JOHN CLIFF.	Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E., I.M.S. ( <i>Medical Assessor</i> ).
Major H. W. WAGSTAFF, M.C., R.E.	} Assistant Commissioners.
Lt.-Col. H. A. J. GIDNEY, M.L.A.	
Mr. J. K. CHATTERJEE.	

Mr. A. DIBDIN, *Joint Secretary*.

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Mr. K. P. BANERJEE, Mr. J. N. GUPTA, Mr. P. CHAKRABORTY, representatives of the Eastern Bengal Railway Indian Employees' Association.

K-2970. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is your experience of railway matters ?—(*Mr. Banerjee*) : We are all associated with railways. I belong to the clerical service, but hold office in the Association as Vice-President, so I am aware of the railway system, and the work-people and the conditions under which they work. I have been 24 years in this service. (*Mr. Gupta*) : I am a traffic guard working in this railway for the last 22 years, and General Secretary of the Association. (*Mr. Chakraborty*) : I have been working for the last 17 years in the Stores Department and am Secretary of a branch.

K-2971. Your Association has been established since 1920 and the Head Office has been in Calcutta since 1927 ?—(*Mr. Banerjee*) : Yes.

K-2972. How do you keep in touch with the districts ?—We have got branches at all important points of the railway, and we have direct correspondence : Calcutta is the headquarters of the Association, and the headquarters control all the activities of the several branches ; their resolutions and reports are always sent to the central office ; any matter of importance is first reported to the central office, and on the advice of the central office the branches proceed to do any work.

K-2973. How many employees have you got as members of the Association ? I think you said about 11,000 ?—Yes.

K-2974. So that really you represent a very substantial portion of workers on the Eastern Bengal Railway ?—Yes.

K-2975. Do you represent all types of workers ?—Yes. (*Mr. Gupta*) : From the working man to the upper services.

K-2976. Are you registered ?—Yes.

K-2977. Have you got a constitution and accounts ?—Yes. They have all been accepted by the Registrar before registering the Association.

K-2978. Are you members of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation and do you take an active interest in its deliberations ?—Yes.

K-2979. Are you a member of the Congress or the Federation of trade unions ?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : No. (*Mr. Banerjee*) : No. We are members of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, but we are not affiliated to the Trade Union Congress or to any other bodies. (*Mr. Gupta*) : We are affiliated to the International Transport Workers' Federation.

K-2980. I see there is another union that is not represented which is called the Kanchrapara Railwaymen's Union. Do you represent any of these workers ?—Yes, we have most of them in our Association, and they are members of our Association.

K-2981. So that you in a way represent their views as well as your own ?—Yes.

K-2982. Are you recognized by the railway ?—Yes.

K-2983. And you have no difficulty in keeping in touch with the railway officials ?—We cannot say we have no difficulty, because whenever we ask for any interview, or have any representation to make personally, we are not always granted the interview. For the past year, our experience is that the present Agent allows all interviews whenever they are asked for. But the year before we asked several times for an interview to represent our case, and that was not given us ; it was not directly refused, but the reply given was that there was not yet time to look into those things, and it was deferred.

K-2984. Are copies of your proceedings or resolutions sent to the railway ?—Yes.

K-2985. And do you get acknowledgments from the railway ?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : Sometimes. (*Mr. Banerjee*) : Always we send copies of our resolutions to the administration, that is, those that are not connected with the domestic affairs of the Association. We send all the resolutions to the Agent. Sometimes we get replies to our resolutions, and sometimes not. When we press for a reply, we are not refused a reply, but it may not be satisfactory, or may not be to the point.

K-2986. You say the Traffic Department allows you to put up individual grievances ?—Yes.

K-2987. Do you find there is a difference between departments, that is, some are friendly to you and some are not ?—Yes.

K-2988. With regard to individual grievances, do you find them prepared to discuss them with you?—No. As regards Traffic Department we have no difficulty, but as regards the other departments we have not tried in that direction. (*Mr. Gupta*) : There is no settlement, about deciding these matters. It is only intended for the Traffic Department. The Traffic Officers invited us to a discussion as to how to dispose of general grievances ; after a long discussion we came to a decision, and some order has been issued to all the officers that such and such system has been introduced.

K-2989. You do not find it in other departments?—No. (*Mr. Banerjee*) : The Medical Department sometimes allows us to represent grievances, general or individual, to the Chief Medical Officer.

K-2990. They have District Welfare Committees in the Traffic Department?—Yes.

K-2991. It is with these Committees you have been in the habit of holding meetings?—Yes.

K-2992. What is the constitution of these committees in the Traffic Department? Are you represented?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : Yes, I have been a member.

K-2993. How are you appointed, or are you elected?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : At first the representation was by nomination, later on it was by election and it is still being done by election ; but there are certain classes of employees, mostly of the inferior class, who do not understand it, and they do not come ; they do not know what it is ; no body tries for it. In that case, when no body is elected, the officers nominate.

K-2994. You, as a Union, have not endeavoured to take an active interest so that you can get the properly elected members of the Union put on to these committees?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : The work on the District Welfare Committees is not official.

K-2995. You have been a member?—Yes ; we have tried to discuss many things, and many things were rejected on the ground that funds were not available, or “ this is not my jurisdiction ”, and years and years have gone by and no notice taken of any of those matters. How can the people rely on these promises? When a man stands up and says “ This is my argument, I want to speak like this ”, they say “ You sit down, you must not speak ”. I remember an occasion like that in the Katihar meeting when the District Officer shouted to me “ Sit down ”.

K-2996. That depends on the Chairman for the time being ; but I understood you had served on these committees?—In certain minor things within the power of the District Officer we can get certain remedies, but, if beyond his power, they cannot be remedied ; and not only that, but as regards election, that is not properly done by the administration. That should be properly circulated. The people should know the objects of this.

K-2997. Did you bring these matters to the notice of the members of that committee?—Yes.

K-2998. What was the result?—Nothing. When the first committee was introduced I made a suggestion to the Traffic Manager regarding the sending of a copy of the recommendations made by Mr. Whitley in the

Whitley Commission in England that when there is any Union in existence a member of the Union should be allowed to sit on the Welfare Committee to serve their interests as members. That was refused.

K-2999. If they gave you the power of election, surely the Union could have arranged matters so as to elect some of your members ?—(*Mr. Bonerjee*) : The election system has been introduced only this year. It was unknown to the staff in previous years when the Welfare Committee was working. So the people were not sufficiently advised about these things. I think as the years go on this Association can train the people in that respect, and more elected people from the Association can be put on the Welfare Committee, but the benefit of the Welfare Committee has not yet been appreciable, so that this Association has not tried to have men elected on these Welfare Committees.

K-3000. What is going to be your policy in future ? Are you to endeavour to have members of your Association elected to serve on these Welfare Committees ?—We shall do our best to have the largest possible number of the members of our Association on the Welfare Committees.

K-3001. You say something about your officials being victimized. What do you actually mean ? Is that general or a very exceptional thing ?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : It is not very general.

K-3002. Is it of recent or ancient occurrence, this victimization, if any ?—It is not very ancient. I will quote certain instances.

K-3003. I do not want details, but a general expression of opinion as to whether this is now done or not.—It is not general. There are certain cases where the staff were victimized. I know of one fitter who was a member of the strike at Kanchrapara Workshop and who became a member of our Association. A report was submitted by the man in charge that this man was taking an active part, and the man was discharged on the ground that he was an agitator.

K-3004. What year was that ?—About five years ago.

K-3005. Why does not your Association favour the establishment of public employment agencies ?—Because we find that in public employment agencies the knowledge obtained probably is only perfunctory, and not complete.

K-3006. I think you misunderstand this ; this does not mean educational employment agencies or anything of that description. It means that an employment agency might be set up in order to recruit workers for employment on your line ?—We did not understand the question in that light because we have here an agency ; some telegraph schools are set up in Calcutta which send pupils for employment on the railway, and they get the upper hand over the people already employed. (*Mr. Gupta*) : We are in favour of a selection board, what we call the staff recruitment board. If that comes under this category we have no objection, but as regards the present system of recruitment from this outside agency, that is, the telegraph training schools, we have objection.

K-3007. If people are unemployed in one part of the country, and there is a vacancy on the Eastern Bengal Railway or other railways, would you be in favour of agencies being set up to transfer unemployed people

from one railway to another ?—There is so much unemployment in Bengal that I do not think it will be necessary to recruit men from outside Bengal.

K-3008. I understand unemployment in Bengal exists among the educated classes more than among the average workers on the railway ?—Yes, but there is the labouring class in Bengal also, but because the wages are not adequate, therefore they do not offer themselves for employment on railway service.

K-3009. Why is it that about 50 per cent. of the workers on the Eastern Bengal Railway have to be imported from Bihar and Orissa and other parts of the country ?—In our Memorandum we have dealt with the agricultural labour. Labour in Bengal is chiefly agricultural. They find labour in the agricultural districts is more profitable than on the railway because the wages in agriculture are better than on the railway, therefore they do not offer their services on railways.

K-3010. The agricultural worker only works for two seasons in the year, the sowing and the reaping time ?—(*Mr. Chakraborty*) : In Bengal agriculture is carried on throughout the year without cessation, one crop after another being produced.

K-3011. *Mr. Cliff* : On this particular railway an Agent has been appointed recently ?—(*Mr. Banerjee*) : Yes, Mr. Maflin.

K-3012. Do you find as a result of the change of Agent a change in the attitude towards the trade union ?—Yes.

K-3013. The railway administration on this railway say “ The trade unions on this railway are not very virile ”. What do you say to that ?—I do not know why he has made that remark, because he sometimes says “ this trade union movement has increased my work ”, and in his last address at our annual conference he recognized that we are doing good work for the railway.

K-3014. Then it goes on to say : “ They concentrate chiefly on grievances of individual employees ”.—We do not concentrate our activities on representing individual grievances only, but we represent the group employees’ general grievances ; at times we have to send individual grievances because there is not sufficient scope for appeal. All the individual grievances that come to us we do not send to the Agent because they are dealt with by the Working Committee, and where we find there is justification for sending them to the Agent we send those only.

K-3015. It then goes on to say : “ The Eastern Bengal Railway Employees’ Association is, however, endeavouring to organize itself on Western lines ”. Is that true ?—By “ Western lines ” I mean according to the trade unionism as adopted in England.

K-3016. Then it says : “ But so far progress has been slight ”. Is that true ?—That depends on opinion ; we do not meet at a propaganda meeting and then give a fiery speech so as to capture the imagination of the people and get them all enrolled in a body, but we work slowly and on a solid basis. That is why our progress has been so slow. (*Mr. Gupta*) : We do not get all sorts of facilities from the department also. (*Mr. Banerjee*) : But that we are gradually getting.

K-3017. Again it is remarked : " In general the existing organizations of employees on this railway are not of much value. The staff are apathetic, funds are low, and the underlying principles of trade organization are really not understood ". That suggests a question to me : what is the method of representation on this particular railway of which you, as a trade union, are able to avail yourselves ?—(*Mr. Banerjee*) : We are in touch with all kinds of labourers in this railway through our branches, and then where we find that there is a particular difficulty in certain class of workers, we have this channel open, that we can meet the Agent or we can represent to him, and then we sometimes get his advice and sometimes the remedy from him, or at least try to get the remedy.

K-3018. Do you send in your representations in writing ?—Yes, always.

K-3019. And having done that do you make a request for interviews in all cases ?—Sometimes we do when the matter is so complicated that the written explanation would not explain the full facts.

K-3020. Are you granted interviews ?—In one or two cases we have been.

K-3021. If you make a representation on a matter common to a whole grade and you have an interview with the Agent, can you illustrate to the Commission the result of your interview ? Do you obtain practical results ?—Yes. There was a proposal that divisional organization should be introduced on this railway, and there was a panic amongst all grades that there would be reduction. On that we made a written representation to the Agent, and then also we asked for a deputation to meet, and he received such a deputation. We sat together and discussed the whole situation, and the Agent gave an assurance that there was no intention of reducing the men, but to re-allocate them to some other service. We made representations that instead of reducing the men, superannuated men should not be given extension, and that no fresh recruitment should be made. All these recommendations he practically accepted.

K-3022. Having had an interview and having received an assurance from the Agent, how do you broadcast that to the employees of the railway ?—We have a magazine, a monthly review, through which we publish the information that is allowed to be published. At the same time we ask the Agent whether we can give publicity to the results of a meeting with him, and if he gives a note saying " You can publish it ", then we publish it.

K-3023. *Mr. Chatterjee* : What about the deputation you requested the Agent to receive to discuss general grievances two years ago ?—That was in *Mr. Pearce's* time. He did not allow any interview, nor did he give any definite reply as to when he was likely to grant an interview.

K-3024. *Mr. Cliff* : Taking the year's experience you have now had under a new Agent, when you are able to make representation, are you able to satisfy your members as to the efficiency of the trade union more than you could under the previous Agent ?—If I say so it will be making direct allegations against the previous Agents, because some of the previous Agents were quite in sympathy with our movement and made direct provisions also, while some of the Agents did not interest themselves in the trade

union movement, or rather were under the impression that the growth of trade unionism would not be desirable for the administration. But the present Agent, from his attitude and from the talk we have had with him, is of that opinion, that is, he wants the trade union to grow here, and he has given certain direct hints that this sort of movement would be beneficial to the administration also, and has given certain advice on that point. Although some facilities that we wanted from him were not granted, I think that was under instructions from the Railway Board.

K-3025. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : What facilities ?—Such as passes for our collectors. We have to collect subscriptions from the jamadars or other people all over the line, and we have the privilege of free travelling, that is, our collectors had that privilege, and now that has been discontinued. That was under the instructions of the Railway Board. About leave for attending the union meetings, he said “ If you have that at your credit we will grant it, but if you have no leave at your credit, it will not be granted ”.

K-3026. *Mr. Cliff* : There was a suggestion in reply to a question that there was a difference in treatment in different departments. Is the attitude of the Agent not being transferred right through the administration ?—From the actual facts we do not think that every department is acting up to the same spirit as that in which the Agent is supposed to have issued orders or expressed his opinion, because we find the traffic department takes up our cases and gets our representation whereas the engineering department does not. The medical department does, the locomotive department does not ; so we do not know what sort of instructions he may have issued ; but from the other departments, the traffic and medical, we get prompt answers and they readily grant our interviews.

K-3027. *Sir Alexander Murray* : A great deal depends on the head of the department ?—Yes.

K-3028. *Mr. Cliff* : This Commission has to enquire and report on the relations between employers and employed and to make recommendations. What do you say with regard to recommendations governing the relations of the railway administration and railway workers ?—We have suggested that in the selection of staff for recruitment and in giving promotion, representatives from the Association should be taken in the committees that select and also in the staff organizations. In the Welfare Meetings and committees there should be representatives from the Association. In the disposal of the fines fund and in making grants-in-aid to the Institute the administration should have the advice of the Association. In fact, in all matters relating to the staff and the improvement of working we want to have a representative in the administration.

K-3029. Have you any joint standing machinery between the union and administration ?—Nothing whatsoever.

K-3030. Is it the opinion of your union that a regular means of negotiation would be of assistance to your union and to the administration ?—Yes.

K-3031. Have you a permanent salaried officer of the union whose whole time is given to union work ?—No. Some clerks and typists we have are on salary ; all the others are honorary workers.

K-3032. In your Memorandum, dealing with "Running staff under traffic department", taking : " (1) Normal, i.e., as determined by custom or agreement ", the answer is " No fixed hours of duty ". What does that mean ?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : There are no fixed hours for working. If we start with a train at 6, it does not matter whether it takes 24, 48 or 50 hours.

K-3033. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you ever had cases of 48 or 50 hours ?—Yes, a man working a goods train has to do double duty, he has to unload packages at the station, and that means he has to serve 30 stations, 175 miles. The attaching and detaching takes an hour, and the unloading and loading of packages takes 1 to 2 hours. That goods train has to give precedence to all passenger trains. There may be engineering restrictions over the line. When the engineering department repair the line, they put a red flag over the line. I may run half a mile and find a red flag there, and the engineering department detain me two hours there. I come to another station and find another train has been given precedence, and I am detained there for that regular train. And then the number of trains are more ; the single line has not capacity for running so many trains.

K-3034. *Mr. Cliff* : Can you tell me how your schedule of duty is made ? You have got two headings for running staff under the traffic department, and then the locomotive department. The railway administration deal with the traffic department in cases where the work is of an intermittent nature, and period of duty is fixed at 12 hours. It also says the normal hours of duty are 8 hours per day. Have you not got a schedule duty for next week ?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : No.

K-3035. Are you a regular guard on a passenger train ?—Yes.

K-3036. How do you know your hours of duty ?—There is an order that when a man works 8 hours he will have 12 hours rest at headquarter station.

K-3037. If you were going on duty to-day how do you know the time for going on ?—On my arrival they put my name in the roster and they book me. That is for passenger trains mostly.

K-3038. Is Calcutta your home station ?—Yes.

K-3039. Have you not got a roster of duty for the whole week ?—No ; for the through and mail trains there is a roster, but for the local trains there is no daily roster ; when the man comes he will get his booking.

K-3040. What is a normal booking for yourself guarding a train ?—At headquarters 12 hours.

K-3041. That is your rest time ; I want your actual booking on the train.—The passenger train generally runs from Calcutta 10 hours, 8 hours or 6 ; some sections 6, some 10 and some 8.

K-3042. That lands you at an outstation or lands you back ?—If I go 6 hours journey (from Calcutta to Khulna), sometimes after working 8 hours I get 8 hours rest at the outstation, but as I have not completed 6 hours they can book me any time under 8 hours to return to Calcutta immediately, which is another 6 hours journey.

K-3043. Without a minimum of rest ?—Yes, because I have not completed 8 hours work.



K-3044. *Mr. Chatterjee* : He deducts that from your rest ?—Yes.

K-3045. *Mr. Cliff* : If you went with a passenger train leaving Calcutta at 8 A.M. and arriving at Khulna at 2 o'clock you could be booked to come back to Calcutta the same day ?—Yes.

K-3046. Is that normal or exceptional ?—Normal. If a man goes 3 hours to Khulna, there is a roster and he must return at 4 down. Whether you call it normal or exceptional this is the order. The train is running daily, and whoever goes by that train, that means normal. As regards local trains working from branches (such as Diamond Harbour or Ranaghat) there are no fixed hours of duty ; as soon as a guard comes in, if there is another train standing with no guard, he has to go out again with two or one hour's notice.

K-3047. I take it that a man working 8 hours is entitled to a minimum rest at an outstation ?—Yes.

K-3048. What is the minimum rest he is entitled to ?—8 hours.

K-3049. And can he be booked back to Calcutta after doing 8 hours minimum rest ?—Sometimes.

K-3050. I do not want "sometimes", but an idea of your regular normal working. Can you take last week and say from memory how you were engaged last week as a guard ?—I am on leave now.

K-3051. I mean your last full week's work. Supposing you went to Khulna, a six hours run, you were given 4 hours rest, and you returned to Calcutta in about 6 hours, that is all done within 24 hours ; would it be possible for you to be booked on duty next day ?—Yes.

K-3052. Is that normal ?—Yes, a man may work 4 hours and return to headquarters after working 4 hours ; then he is booked after 1 or 2 hours. That is normal regarding local trains.

K-3053. Do you work 7 days a week as a guard ?—Yes, every day.

K-3054. No day of rest ?—No.

K-3055. In Calcutta, in the section in which you work, what is the average working week, not taking spreadover ?—It is 10 hours a day.

K-3056. Is that 70 hours a week ?—Yes.

K-3057. What is a fair definition of intermittent work ?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : Those who are working at stations have intermittent work, but that time is often utilized for office work ; for instance, where one Station Master is in charge of a station and 12 trains pass in the 24 hours, he not only has to pass those 12 trains but he has to prepare statements and statistics and he cannot do that in 2 hours. Even when he goes home he is liable to be called upon to return immediately. The intermittent period is of no practical use to him for rest. If he refuses to go back when called upon he is liable to be reported.

K-3058. Does that mean that there are stations where men are on call during the whole of the 24 hours ?—Yes.

K-3059. Are there many stations of that character ?—Yes.

K-3060. A goods porter told me that he was at a station through which 18 trains passed in the 24 hours and he was liable to be called upon in reference to each of the 18 trains. Is that fairly general ?—Yes, that is general.

K-3061. Does a goods porter get any annual holiday with pay ?—No.

K-3062. Does that mean that a goods porter of that grade is on duty every day of the year ?—Every day and every time.

K-3063. An assistant booking clerk told me his salary was Rs. 70 per month and his debits generally came to about Rs. 20 a month. What are the debits of booking clerks ?—Booking clerks employed at heavy stations like Sealdah, where there is a great rush of traffic, have to give a large number of tickets to passengers in a short time. In many cases he has to work out the fare, while the passengers outside are waiting, shouting for their tickets and want to know why there is delay. In fact that is general with all booking clerks. Generally booking clerks have to make up any debits as do passenger luggage clerks, who have to book luggage and have the same difficulties.

K-3064. What happens if a booking clerk has surplus cash in the till ?—He has to deposit it. There may be short receipts or excess receipts ; whatever it is he has to mark it. He is bound to pay the excess then and there. If he fails to do so he is reported and sometimes it is regarded as a criminal offence.

K-3065. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : In your memorandum it is stated that a police officer is sent to take notes of resolutions even at working committee meetings and that although your Union desires no secrecy with regard to its activities it is often disturbed by C. I. D. visitors ?—Have you made any enquiries as to whether it is done under instructions of the Agent ?—(*Mr. Banerjee*) : No, it is not under instructions of the Agent but it is under the instructions of the Government of Bengal.

K-3066. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How do you know that ?—Because he says " I have been sent by the Police " ; and if he comes late he says " Give me the resolutions passed at this meeting ", and we hand in the resolutions. Sometimes he is there during the whole of the meeting and he takes copies of the resolutions. I do not think it is under the instructions of the Agent but under the instructions of the Political Department.

K-3067. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Have you any information as to whether copies of reports of your meeting which are taken by the Police are sent to the Agent ?—We have no opportunity of knowing that, because nothing incriminating is done by our Association and so no action has been taken against us.

K-3068. Is there a regular procedure for the police to come to your meetings and take *verbatim* reports of the proceedings ?—Yes.

K-3069. A statement has been made by the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association dealing with the Eastern Bengal Railway, suggesting that railway unions sprang up in 1920-21 which might be regarded as political associations for the overthrow of law and order and to imperil the trade and commerce of the country. Does your Union come within that category ?—Our union was established in 1920 and still exists. It

does not come within that category. We did not know that there was such an association of Anglo-Indian employees here.

K-3070. At any time between 1920 when your Union was formed and the present time has any encouragement been given by the Agent for the setting up of a proper trade union on the Eastern Bengal Railway ?—We do not know of any direct encouragement but there was direct discouragement at one time. Colonel Cameron, the Agent of the Railway, was invited to attend our annual conference in 1924 and he actually opened the conference. The President of the conference, who was an employee of this Railway, in the course of his speech said that railway employees were ill-clad, ill-fed and therefore suffered injustice, in regard to which improvements were required. Colonel Cameron took exception to that remark and asked : “ Do you make this aspersion against the administration ? ” The President said : “ Yes, if those are our conditions then of course the aspersion is against the administration ”. Colonel Cameron then said : “ As Agent of the Eastern Bengal Railway and being a representative of the administration, I cannot stay here ”. He therefore left the meeting and with him all the officers of the Railway left. The meeting continued and concluded its deliberations. Colonel Cameron went back to his headquarters and ordered that this Association should not be acknowledged, that its activities should be stopped by all means and that it should not be allowed to hold meetings on railway premises or land. In that way he attempted to destroy our organization.

K-3071. That is mentioned by the Agent himself in his memorandum and he says that about a year later the facilities were given to you ?—That is so.

K-3072. Apart from those facilities, has any attempt been made by the Agent to get into touch with you in order to help you to set up a virile trade union on the Eastern Bengal Railway ?—Nothing so far.

K-3073. What do you mean when you say in your memorandum that the management has not fully recognized the trade union ?—They do not accept us as representatives of the whole of the employees ; before introducing new measures or new schemes they do not consult us.

K-3074. In regard to the new rules, which are to be made by the Railway Board, in regard to the day of rest and the hours of work, has your Union so far been consulted by the Agency ?—No, but we have sent a memorandum, seeing that they are making the experiment of introducing the Geneva and Washington Conventions by cooking the hours and making such arrangements that though the staff are supposed to work 8 hours they must in fact work 10 hours, making 60 hours a week.

K-3075. The Commission has been informed that the Railway Board are considering revision of rules in regard to discharges and dismissals ; has your Union been consulted with regard to that ?—No.

K-3076. Both you and the Agent in your memoranda have referred to the 1920 strike. The Agent says that the men came back unconditionally, but you say that the Agent gave certain assurances. Which of those statements is correct ?—Our information is that Colonel Cameron accompanied by a District Traffic Superintendent gave a personal assurance that the grievances would be looked into and would be redressed. But nothing was

done except that those persons who led the strike were victimized ; that is to say they were discharged or dismissed.

K-3077. Has your Union any policy in regard to a change in the service agreement ?—Yes. We have not dealt with that in our memorandum. This agreement as it stands says that our service is temporary ; that gives us no security of service ; we consider the service agreement to be one-sided.

K-3078. Perhaps you could let us have a statement with regard to the changes which you suggest in the service agreement ?—Yes.

K-3079. We have been informed in various other centres that one of the great difficulties that faces trade unions is the question of promotions. Can you quote actual cases in which promotion has been blocked and can you suggest a way out of the difficulties which face your Union ?—Yes, I will do so.

K-3080. If you were given proper facilities with regard to leave, and the holding of your meetings in the shape of free passes, do you think you would be in a position to build up a strong trade union on the Eastern Bengal Railway ?—Yes.

K-3081. If you had a system of works councils so that before a man could be dismissed or discharged his case could come before the works council and there was an appeal, do you think that would help to stabilize labour ?—Yes, that would greatly help.

K-3082. Would you be in favour of an independent body being set up for the purpose of recruitment ?—We are opposed to that ; we want the Staff Selection Board to be reconstituted and to take a representative of the employees to serve on it.

K-3083. So that you would rather leave the recruitment to the Staff Selection Board so long as there is representation of the union on that Board ?—Yes.

K-3084. At present I understand some of the higher appointments are made through the Public Service Commission on which there is one representative of the Agency. Would you desire that those higher appointments should also be in the hands of the Staff Selection Board as reconstituted ?—As far as the gazetted officers are concerned, we have no objection to the present system continuing.

K-3085. *Major Wagstaff* : I have here what purports to be a typical duty roster of guards on mail trains. I think it is based on Sealdah. It is given in considerable detail ; it says that the average rest in Calcutta is 16 hours and at outstations 12 hours. Would you agree that that is typical of a mail train link ?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : Yes.

K-3086. Next we have a typical duty roster of a local train, also given in full details with timings, in which the average rest is 12 hours, no body getting less than 8 hours rest and every man spending the night in bed. I think that also is based on Sealdah ?—That is so, if the full strength of staff is there, but not otherwise.

K-3087. Are you personally based on Sealdah ?—Yes.

K-3088. In the last four months how many times can you remember when such abnormal conditions obtained as regards men going sick that

the typical timings which I have quoted did not apply ?—During the last fortnight I have had reports that the men have had to come to work with only 2 hours rest.

K-3089. But what has been your own experience during the last four months ; how many times have you had to go out of course because of men falling sick or taking leave or anything of that kind ?—On three or four occasions in four months I had to do it.

K-3090. Otherwise you agree that the roster is typical ?—Yes ; but the full strength is not always maintained.

K-3091. Then I have a typical duty roster of mail train drivers from Calcutta to Parbatipur. The average rest at home is  $25\frac{1}{2}$  hours, while the average rest at outstations is  $12\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Would you agree that that is typical ?—Yes.

*Mr. Cliff* : What are the typical working hours ?

*Major Wagstaff* : They are not here, but I will have them got out. They are very small ; I have known cases of 40 hours a week. Mail trains are always the best in this respect. The bad cases occur with regard to goods trains.

K-3092. You are working passenger trains at present ?—Yes.

K-3093. But you have in the past worked on-goods trains ?—Yes.

K-3094. What was the number of hours in the week which you did when you were on goods trains ?—70 to 80 hours.

K-3095. I have a case here where the average running time was 10 hours per day ; to obtain the weekly hours that must be multiplied by 7. If the International Conventions were applied to running staff those timings would of course have to be reduced. If that were done, would not the staff lose in overtime or mileage ?—Yes, they might.

K-3096. Would they acquiesce in decreased wages because they would not be doing the amount of work that they did before ?—They would be only too glad because the more they work the more they lose in other directions. Working hard without proper rest re-acts upon a man's health and he is put to expense for that reason.

K-3097. Then you consider they would not mind losing a little pay in order to gain the advantage of less hours of work ?—Yes, but of course it depends upon their receiving a living wage ; if a man does not get a living wage he will suffer.

K-3098. In your memorandum you say that the application of the International Labour Conventions relating to hours of work and rest days has not yet been introduced. Does that remark apply both to hours and rest days ?—Yes.

K-3099. With regard to hours, some staff are surely already working in accordance with Article 10 of the Washington Convention ?—Some are working in accordance with that Convention and some are not.

K-3100. In your memorandum you have stated that 52 hours a week is normal ?—(*Mr. Banerjee*) : That is normal ; it is 8 hours working, but they are on call for 16 hours.

K-3101. Article 10 of the Washington Convention limits the work to 60 hours ; and you say that these men do 52 hours. In saying that the International Conventions have not been introduced you possibly mean that they have not been applied with regard to rest days ?—Yes.

K-3102. The same remark will apply to the next category : men employed in the traffic department under the Traffic Manager who do 39 hours. Then there are the men engaged in “ building roads and bridges, drains, etc., masonry work under executive engineers ” ; signal workshop and signal engineers and the men employed in locomotive carriage workshops. With regard to all these you have reiterated that the International Labour Conventions have not been introduced, but in the cases which I have quoted I think you will agree that it is with regard to days of rest only that the Conventions have not been introduced ?—Yes, we agree.

K-3103. I think you said that a goods porter gets no annual holiday with pay ; is that really so ?—(*Mr. Gupta*) : He gets no leave with pay.

K-3104. Are you quite sure that on the Eastern Bengal Railway he is never allowed leave with pay ?—Yes. This matter was represented to the Agent and was fully discussed in the Legislative Assembly. The reply was given that it was being considered ; they have been considering it for the last five years and have not come to a decision yet. Porters, *khalasis*, lamp men and servants are not getting any leave with pay.

K-3105. With regard to what you say as to fines, are you in favour of rigid regulations with regard to fining, or do you advocate the complete abolition of fines ?—(*Mr. Banerjee*) : Instead of fines other methods of punishment have been introduced, *viz.*, stoppage of promotion, reduction of wages, etc., fines are better than the latter forms of punishment. Therefore we demand there should be some legislation with regard to fines.

K-3106. Will you give us some details as to the mutual benefit schemes and the death benefit fund which you say your Union has started ?—The fund has been started, classified under three classes : paying Re. 1, As. 8 and As. 4 quarterly. We give an annual account. After meeting the general expenses the balance will be transferred to reserve fund. It has been working for two years.

K-3107. I presume it is a voluntary and additional subscription ; what proportion of your members have joined ?—One to 2 per cent.

K-3108. How many times have you made payments from this fund ?—We have not yet had any occasion to pay, because there has been no death.

K-3109. You say you have a membership of 11,000. If a man writes on a piece of paper that he agrees with your aims, and is willing to join your Union, do you regard him as a member of your Union ?—Yes, if he pays his subscription regularly.

K-3110. I suppose that is a *sine qua non* ?—Yes.

K-3111. Is the subscription payable monthly ?—Yes.

K-3112. What was your membership two years ago ?—About 9,000.

K-3113. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Will you send us your report and balance sheet ?—Yes.

K-3114. *Mr. Cliff* : Do you send your balance sheet to the Registrar of Trade Unions ?—Yes.

K-3115. *Col. Gidney* : When did you register as a trade union ?—In 1926.

K-3116. You call yourself an Employees' Association, do you not ?—Yes.

K-3117. You do not go by the name of " Union " ?—No.

K-3118. You were not registered as a Union in 1920-21 ?—No.

*Col. Gidney* : Therefore the remark made in the Anglo-Indian Memorandum to which reference has been made by Diwan Chaman Lall does not include you, for I know you are not a political body. I gladly excuse your Association from that statement and apologize if it has hurt you.

*The witness* : We thank you for clearing up that point.

K-3119. You say that instead of fines a system of punishment by reduction of grade is being practised ?—Yes, sometimes the reduction affects the grade.

K-3120. Is reduction in grade a double punishment ?—Yes.

K-3121. It reduces your wages for the period and also reduces your provident fund ?—Yes and reduces the man in the future.

K-3122. Is the practice of making men work when under rest due to the railway being understaffed ?—Yes, the leave reserve is inadequate.

K-3123. If there were more staff, do you think you would be able to get your leave ?—Yes.

K-3124. Is privilege leave difficult to obtain because the railways are under-staffed ?—Yes.

<sup>3</sup> K-3125. In your memorandum you refer to Kala Azar, black water fever, etc., as industrial diseases ; there are 23 unhealthy stations on your Railway. Do you think these diseases are contracted solely and entirely by occupation in those stations ?—Yes.

K-3126. Do you think you should be insured against sickness or some such relief should be given ?—Yes.

K-3127. Would you accept the application of the Workmen's Compensation Act for the period during which you may be ill when employed in those unhealthy stations in place of the 25 per cent. extra pay that you now get ?—We do not always get 25 per cent., that is only given in Assam ; but the whole of the Eastern Bengal Railway is unhealthy.

K-3128. You have given a long list showing the yearly profit and loss of the Eastern Bengal Railway ; do you mean to imply that while the Eastern Bengal Railway has been making a profit, workmen's wages have not been increased proportionately ?—Yes.

K-3129. There is at present a Railway Reserve Fund in the Railway Board which amounts to nearly 20 crores, to which the Eastern Bengal Railway contributes. Do you think that a part of that reserve fund should be kept by the Agent and used for the purpose of ameliorating the hardship of employees ?—Yes : that would be appreciated by our Association.

K-3130. Do you recommend that a National Wages Board should be constituted ?—Yes.

K-3131. You indicate in your statement that the Workmen's Compensation Act is not applicable to any Indian State through which your Railway may run ?—Yes.

K-3132. So that if an accident occurs to a workman whilst running over the territory of an Indian State, the Workmen's Compensation Act would not apply ?—That is so.

K-3133. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Did an accident occur in Cooch Behar and was it held by the Railway or the Court that the workman was not entitled to recover under the Workmen's Compensation Act ?—Yes.

K-3134. Did the Railway Company take their stand on that and refuse as an act of agree to give the compensation or did they give the compensation in that case ?—They did not give compensation.

K-3135. *Col. Gidney* : You ask that that should be altered ?—Yes.

K-3136. You say that the payment of wages to staff is delayed and you ask that the system which is applied to the Posts and Telegraphs should be adopted ?—Yes.

K-3137. You ask that the system of payment which obtains among other classes of Government servants should be applied to you ?—Yes.

K-3138. Do you think that is practical ?—Yes.

K-3139. You say that the staff are indebted ?—Yes.

K-3140. In view of the fact that the Eastern Bengal Railway runs through malarious areas, do you think that indebtedness is due to illness, and is it also due to decreased wages ?—Both.

K-3141. You appear to exclude religious and marriage ceremonies as a cause ?—Social obligations are also a cause. I think the indebtedness is half due to ill-health and half to social obligations. Indebtedness may also be said to be due to low wages and high cost of living.

K-3142. Have you approached the Agent with regard to the introduction of bonus or profit sharing schemes ?—Not yet.

K-3143. Why do you say it is hardly possible for a subordinate employee to interview an officer to represent his case ?—Whenever an aggrieved person wants to see an officer he is refused an interview. When a written communication is sent in, it is sometimes acknowledged but it is merely a stereotyped reply, communicating that his case cannot be considered, that orders must stand, and it is final.

K-3144. You are aware that there is a prescribed channel through which to address a higher authority ?—Yes.

K-3145. If you insist on addressing the Agency through the prescribed channels are the men victimized ?—Yes. I have here particulars of such cases.

K-3146. When you are sick, do you experience any difficulty in getting sick leave ?—The station staff at small stations are told that they cannot be relieved from duty owing to lack of staff to take their places. The Medical Officer is sympathetic but the District Officer is not.



K-3147. *Col. Russell* : The Medical Officer and the Director of Public Health have stated that the Eastern Bengal is a very malarious and unhealthy region. Is the health of the staff of the Eastern Bengal Railway worse or better than that of the general population ?—It is the same.

K-3148. The Railway extends through the Terai and the Dooars. In those parts are there any stations which have been labelled as unhealthy stations ?—There is only one in the Terai ; there are several in the Dooars.

K-3149. Those are definitely labelled as unhealthy ?—Yes.

K-3149a. According to the Medical Officer's report there are only 23 places which have been described as unhealthy ; would you suggest that there should be an addition to that number ?—Yes, there should be about 35 to 40 in all, including the stations which are at present described as unhealthy. (*Mr. Gupta*) : I have submitted to the Chief Medical Officer a list of stations which should be described as unhealthy.

K-3150. You say in your memorandum that the deplorable health conditions of the staff are also due to want of sympathetic treatment by officers and superintending subordinate officers. What do you mean by that ?—(*Mr. Banerjee*) : Because of lack of leave reserve, leave is refused and men who are ill are required to work which makes their health worse. That is what we call the unsympathetic attitude of the officers.

K-3151. Is the supervising subordinate officer in a position to decide whether a man shall work or not ?—Yes ; in order to be medically examined the men have to produce a ticket to the Medical Officer and in some cases instructions are issued not to grant men the sick certificate.

K-3152. What are your suggestions for the improvement of S. and R. types of houses ?—Apart from the question of space occupied by utensils and furniture these quarters have only 720 cubic ft. of air space. The air space should be enlarged. One room is not sufficient for a married man to live in ; there should be two rooms with a small courtyard and privy.

K-3153. Do you want privies in each house ?—Yes.

K-3154. Do you think that would be feasible ?—Yes. Some of the working people are of the *bhadralok* class and their women observe *pardah*. They cannot therefore use the common latrines. That is why we want a latrine in each quarter.

K-3155. Would that not involve a considerable addition to the conservancy staff ?—The conservancy staff has to deal with the common latrines at present and single latrines would not lead to any extra work. In places where many people live, an increased staff would be required, but not in stations where there are only few people.

K-3156. You say that where the plinths are only 2' 6" above ground level, the houses are damp and insanitary ?—2' 6" is not high enough for Eastern Bengal. It may be sufficient in some cases, but it is insufficient in marshy tracts. The plinth should be 2' 6" above the highest flood level.

K-3157. You are not satisfied with regard to the lighting of your quarters ; do you suggest that the Railway should provide lights round the houses and in the houses ?—Inside the house and also in the verandah.

K-3158. Would it be sufficient if the roads were lighted ?—In colonies the roads have to be lighted, but in small stations the light is not so much needed on the roads.

K-3159. You say one-fifth of the staff suffers from malaria, but the statistics of the Medical Officer give it as one-seventh ?—He has the statistics and he is probably more accurate than we are.

K-3160. You object to houses built in barrack form ?—Yes ; they are back to back.

K-3161. I object to that type just as much as you do. You say no facilities are provided by the administration to supply the employees with wholesome food. Do you suggest that the railway authorities should open food shops or co-operative stores ?—Yes, that is our suggestion. There is a co-operative society at Saidpore, and there is a co-operative society here for loans.

K-3162. Would the Railway employees use these shops if they were provided ?—Yes, they would.

K-3163. You say that certain classes of workers are not attended to by the doctor unless they are provided with a memo. from the managing staff ?—If the Station Master does not want to relieve a porter who is sick he does not issue a slip to the doctor for the man to be examined, and unless the doctor gets a slip from the Station Master the man is not examined.

K-3164. So that, he is officially well though unofficially sick ?—Yes.

K-3165. What is your solution for that ?—That the staff should have free access to the doctor without any bias or prejudice from the supervising staff.

K-3166. You would say that the Station Master is not in a position to diagnose sickness ?—Yes.

K-3167. Has the Station Master any instructions to do that from the Railway administration ?—We know there are no such instructions, but he may be hard pressed, having only one porter to do the work, and he cannot do without him.

K-3168. If he does act in that way, is he liable to get into trouble with the administration ?—In that case the administration says that the Station Master is the best judge and they will not interfere.

K-3169. Supposing the Station Master did give the porter a memorandum and reported that he could not carry on because the porter was sick, do you think the administration would object to that ?—I do not think so.

K-3170. It is stated in different memoranda from the Railway that sanitary committees have been appointed at different stations ; what is your opinion of their work ?—The sanitary committees make recommendations, but they are not carried out on account of lack of funds.

K-3171. Apart from the question of expense, are they of any use ?—The sanitary committees are working all right.

K-3172. They do a certain amount of good ?—Yes.

K-3173. So that you approve of them ?—Yes.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

Representatives of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Employees of Railways :

*Spokesman.*

**Mr. CAMERON**, General Secretary, Anglo-Indian Association.

*Advisers.*

**Mr. BASTIEN**, Kanchrapara, E. B. Railway ; **Mr. RIGG**, E. I. Railway ; **Mr. MARTSTON**, Adra, B. N. Railway ; **Mr. BACKMAN**, Khurda Road, B. N. Railway ; **Mr. POWELL**, Kanchrapara, E. B. Railway ; **Mr. LARDNER**, Retd., E. I. Railway ; **Mr. WILSON**, Moradabad, O. & R. Section, E. I. Railway ; **Mr. ATKINSON**, Travelling Secretary of the Association.

K-3174. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You are representatives of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association ?—(*Mr. Cameron*) : We are submitting memoranda on behalf of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European employees on the 4 Railways, the Eastern Bengal Railway, the East Indian Railway, the Bengal Nagpur Railway and the Assam Bengal Railway.

K-3175. What is the total number of employees on these Railways who belong to the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association ?—I could not say off-hand, but we represent about three-quarters of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European employees. I will furnish you with the figures at a later date.

K-3176. You are not registered as a trade union, are you ?—No.

K-3177. Do you propose to be so registered ?—The Association does not intend to be registered as a trade union, but we are going to start a trade union for the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European employees which will work in co-operation with the Association.

K-3178. You propose forming a trade union of Anglo-Indians ; do you think that is advisable ?—The proposition is still in a liquid state ; we have not yet decided.

K-3179. Have you applied for recognition to the Railways concerned ?—We did apply. The Agents replied that as we were not a registered trade union they were not able to recognize us as acting on behalf of the employees. But otherwise they have recognized us in representing individual and collective cases of employees because these employees have not any trade union at the moment and we are functioning to a large extent as a trade union though we are not registered as a trade union.

K-3180. You have actually been in correspondence with the Agents of four Railways and have been receiving replies from them with regard to grievances put forward on behalf of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European employees ?—We have.

K-3181. Have you made similar representations to the Railway Board ?—Yes. They have recognized us and have expressed their recognition in memoranda.

K-3182. We find that you base a good deal of your claim for consideration by Railways on past services rendered to the Railways by the Anglo-Indian community ; that is to say by the fathers and grand-fathers of the present members ?—No ; we merely state that as we have contributed to building up the Railways and bringing them to their present efficient conditions, our claims should not be overlooked.

K-3183. Other things being equal, you think that the sons and grand-sons of these older Anglo-Indians ought to have special consideration given to their claims for appointment ?—I do. I also think it would be to the interests of the Railways to do so, because these people have family traditions of loyalty and service ; they have from their childhood grown up in railway surroundings with the result that they have a certain aptitude for the work.

K-3184. You appreciate that the tendency, as time goes on, must be to have more and more Indians and fewer Anglo-Indians on the Railways ?—I do not see that, because Anglo-Indians are also Indians.

K-3185. As the Railways expand and more Indians take to the life it is going to be difficult for the Anglo-Indian to increase his numbers in competition with the Indian ?—We realise that the logic of events must bring more Indians into competition for regular employment and the pressure of these forces is already being felt. We realise that the number of Indians is so much larger than the number of Anglo-Indians, that they will in time displace the Anglo-Indians from the Railway service. But we seek some protection for a period which will enable us to equip ourselves to compete equally with the Indians.

K-3186. I take it your view is that so long as suitable and qualified Indians are appointed your Association has no grievance of any description ?—We qualify that. We certainly appreciate that if suitable Indians are appointed we have no grievance, but we say that for a certain period we should be given a certain amount of protection as we have rendered service to the Railways and we ought to be given time to equip ourselves to compete equally. Our general policy is that ultimately we shall take our place on equal terms with the Indians.

K-3187. You ask that for the present special consideration should be given to you ?—Yes.

K-3188. In your memoranda, in one case you say that as far as Anglo-Indians are concerned, if there is not a suitable man on one line a man should be taken from another line, but in another place you say that you do not want to encourage this transference from line to line ?—I think that is in regard to promotion to the official grade. Where you have the men available but they may not come up to the requisite standard for the official grade, whereas the other statement refers to only the upper subordinates. We want to protect the employee who is already in service and whose claims have been overlooked in favour of outside drivers and guards.

K-3189. You say that Anglo-Indians in the School of Mines at Dhanbad are not getting a fair chance. Do you know of any cases in which anybody has qualified at the School of Mines at Dhanbad and has suffered any disadvantage in competition with anybody else ; because we

have not yet come across any cases of Anglo-Indians who have qualified at Dhanbad ?—(*Mr. Rigg*) : As far as I know this statement is confined to the East Indian Railway and does not refer to men who have passed through the Mining School. If a man has a second or first class certificate, that does not ensure his being employed in the East Indian Railway mines, where they generally appoint covenanted men. So far only one man who passed his examination in India has been employed.

K-3190. You are talking about an Anglo-Indian who holds the certificate of manager or assistant manager, and your point is that preference is given to men coming out from Home ?—Yes.

K-3191. As a matter of fact when we were at Giridih we had Anglo-Indian managers giving evidence before us. This does not apply to the Dhanbad Mining School ?—No, that is a mistake. I mean qualified men. (*Mr. Cameron*) : I would like to substantiate this with further information later on. I know of a case of a man by the name of Jackson who was qualified. Questions were asked in the Legislative Assembly about this particular case.

K-3192. You say you prefer a district system of administration. Why ?—Because under the divisional system the officers are so tied down to their desk that they lose touch with their men. The district system was more a family arrangement. An officer came into touch with these men, he knew his subordinates better and there were better relations.

K-3193. On a Railway like the East Indian Railway which has over 4,000 miles of line and 160,000 workers, I should have thought the divisional system would have brought the employees in districts much nearer to their officers than the old system did ?—Under the divisional system there is such a lot of office work that the officers themselves complain that they have no time to get into touch with the staff.

K-3194. There is no difference between the divisional system and the district system so far as the shops are concerned, because the Superintendent of the shop is responsible to the Divisional Engineer under both systems ?—Yes.

K-3195. In the memorandum dealing with the Eastern Bengal Railway you have a chapter on discipline while in the memorandum of the East Indian Railway you have a chapter on victimization ?—The memoranda are representative ; they are founded on facts supplied to us by the employees of those Railways who are members of our Association. The employees of one Railway furnished us with material on discipline, and those on the other Railway on victimization.

K-3196. Your members who are employed on the Eastern Bengal Railway seem to have a grievance because the power of inflicting fines, reduction and discharge has been taken out of the hands of subordinates ?—(*Mr. Bastien*) : The supervising staff are responsible to the officers for the amount of work. The foremen and chargemen should have disciplinary powers.

K-3197. *Mr. Birla* : In the memorandum with regard to the East Indian Railway with regard to recruitment you give figures of Hindus, Mussalmans, and other classes as compared with recruitment of Anglo-Indians. Is this a fair comparison ? You will agree with me that in

many cases Anglo-Indians do not start on the same level as Indians ?—*(Mr. Cameron)* : Yes, because the standard of life of the Anglo-Indian is so much higher.

K-3198. These figures include menials, and other low paid servants ?—Yes ; it shows the additional hands that have been engaged because of the additional mileage. I cannot give you the proportion of menials because I have not got the figure.

K-3199. *Sir Alexander Murray* : If you can get those figures you will send them in ?—Yes.

K-3200. *Mr. Birla* : It is your intention to form a separate trade union for your members ?—I dare say as times change it will become the Union for every body.

K-3201. Is there not going to be a trade union entirely for Anglo-Indians ?—For the moment it may be, because we are outside the other trade unions.

K-3202. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Why do you say that ?—We do not approve of the manner in which some trade unions are carried on.

K-3203. *Mr. Birla* : Why do you want a separate trade union for yourselves ? Why do you not join the unions already existing ?—Because we find our members do not favour the manner of administration of these unions. At present we desire to have a Union composed of Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans, but nothing has been decided upon at present.

K-3204. You complain that on account of the very low standards which have been fixed for certain jobs, the members of your community will not be able to compete ?—I have a certain standard of life which I have to support and the minimum wage is so low that I cannot support my standard of life on that wage and so I should be automatically shut out from that employment.

K-3205. Do you wish the Railways would fix wages according to the standards of life of particular communities or according to the qualifications and output of work that they do ?—I want the Railways to fix wages in accordance with standards of life which are reasonable according to the standards of other advanced countries. The standard of life of an Indian is acknowledged even by the Indians to be unduly low ; therefore a wage based on the standard of life of an Indian is not a fair wage.

K-3206. Would you support the proposition that the basis of the standard of life of all communities should be at a higher level ?—Yes. I do strongly support that.

K-3207. If that were done would you have any reason to complain ?—None whatever.

K-3208. As a practical man have you taken into consideration the fact that that would enormously increase the cost of running the Railways ?—I have.

K-3209. Who is to pay for that?—The Railways. It is a fallacy that if you increase wages the increased cost will necessarily come out of profits.

K-3210. May I take it that you do not want any racial discrimination, but you desire to raise the standard of life in all the communities?—Yes. I think we have made it perfectly clear that we want the Indians to come up to our standard.

K-3211. Why do you complain of the enhanced standard of education imposed on candidates for employment?—Because in other countries Railways are not run on educational qualifications of the employees. Alertness and strength of arm are of more importance than a knowledge of foreign languages and other such academical qualifications. Once you commence to impose educational qualifications it is usually carried to an illogical extent; for instance, the Calcutta Corporation are asking for B. A.'s to work as lamp lighters.

K-3212. *Mr. Cliff*: The Railway Board under the heading of "Trade Combinations" referring to your Association say that you have 88 branches scattered all over India and Burma in almost every important Railway station, that your total membership is over 10,000, of whom 80 per cent. are railway employees. Is your Association concerned to defend the special interests of Anglo-Indians?—Yes, all Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans in this country. We have railway employees as members of our Association and we are the only medium by which they can all represent their grievances and difficulties; they have come to us and we have come to you.

K-3213. There are people employed on the Railways who are not entitled to be members of your Association?—Yes, if they are not Anglo-Indians or Domiciled Europeans.

K-3214. In what way do you associate yourselves with the other railway workers?—By being in perfect sympathy with them; there is nothing in our policy which is in any way inimical to the other employees of the railways.

K-3215. Railway Unions have represented to this Commission that on occasions they have had no option but to withdraw their labour in order to draw attention to the evils from which they were suffering?—Yes.

K-3216. It does appear to be admitted that in certain instances they were entitled to have their grievances remedied?—Yes.

K-3217. One branch of your Association is making its claim for consideration by this Commission on the ground that they have stood by the Railway administration?—When this particular Branch has made that statement that it has stood by the Railway administration it does not mean they have been actual blacklegs in regard to strikes by other employees, but if we are to be expected to take part in a strike we feel that we are entitled to be consulted before the strike takes place. Secondly we ask ourselves whether these strikes have taken place purely on economic grounds connected with the Railways or have they been political strikes. Probably strikes have taken place for both these reasons and we, who have been in this country, have assessed these

things for ourselves and have not been satisfied that we were justified in withdrawing our loyalty from the Railway administration. We are not disloyal to the other Indian employees but we have not felt justified in withdrawing our loyalty from the administration in strikes that have occurred.

K-3218. What does your Association suggest to this Commission with a view to dealing with those grievances which are common to both the trade unions and your Association?—We have given our support to the unions.

K-3219. Can you suggest any machinery which should be established to deal with the grievances of all railway employees?—We have suggested a conciliation board and establishment of relationship between the unions and the administration.

K-3220. May this Commission take it that your Association is in favour of the extension of the trade union organization on the Railways?—Yes, if properly administered. I think the Railway would do well to recognize, support and promote the unions in order to harness the affairs of the unions to the interests of the Railway. By opposing unions I think the Railway administration have done a lot to antagonise the sympathies of the employees.

K-3221. You will be prepared to grant to the trade unions the same rights that you claim for your own Association?—Yes.

K-3222. That is to administer their affairs in accordance with the will of their members?—And to administer their affairs according to certain recognized standards and principles. The railway unions should have nothing to do with political motives; they should confine themselves to railway interests and should not be influenced by outside political motives, by racial hatred and that sort of thing. When they are fully developed I believe the Unions will be very healthy organizations, but at the moment they are not developed.

K-3223. Is your Association prepared to assist the other workers on the Railways to develop trade unions?—Most certainly.

K-3224. In dealing with working conditions, rates and wages on Railways, do you think the conciliation machinery which you propose should be representative of all classes of workers?—Yes, and that our claims with regard to the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European employees should also be fully represented. We feel that they might not be properly represented if the membership of the Central Committee is based on numerical strength.

K-3225. All the memoranda submitted to the Commission on behalf of workers on the Railways seem to be in favour of the application of the Washington Convention, but you seem to make qualifications?—(Mr. Rigg): There are many cases where relief is not available, and where a man goes and tries to take protection under the Medical Officer. If the District Medical Officer happens to be friendly with the supervisor, relief on account of sickness may not be given. The whole question is based on adequate relief being available; it is a question of the shortage of staff. If owing to shortage of staff it is inconvenient to give leave pressure is brought to bear on the Medical Officer.



K-3226. *Col. Russell* : I suppose you can get a certificate from some other doctor ?—That is not accepted. After being contested it has been accepted but the man got into trouble over it.

K-3227. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : In what capacity are you appearing before the Royal Commission ?—(*Mr. Cameron*) : I am here as the spokesman of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European employees of the East Indian Railway, the Eastern Bengal Railway, the Bengal Nagpur Railway and the Assam Bengal Railway.

K-3228. Are you aware that the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association is a political Association ?—Not that I am aware of. For three years I have been answering that charge and explaining how we are not a political organization.

K-3229. Does your Association deal with the political status of Anglo-Indians in this country ?—Only when we are invited to give our opinion on certain matters.

K-3230. Does your organization deal with the political status of Anglo-Indians ?—It deals with the economic status of Anglo-Indians and the political status might be dealt with in giving particulars of the economic status.

K-3231. Your Association is not a trade union ?—It is not.

K-3232. Do you know of the rule in the Government Servants' Conduct Rules which prevents an Anglo-Indian or an Indian from joining and becoming a member of a body which is a political organization ?—Yes, I do.

K-3233. Has any objection ever been raised to any of the members of your community being members of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association ?—Yes ; from time to time Members of the Assembly have asked questions about it and they have had the reply from Government that though Government know that we do occasionally have to deal with political activities, our ordinary work is not political.

K-3234. May I take it, therefore, that the position is that as far as an Indian is concerned he is debarred from joining an organization which would deal with his political status *inter alia* with other matters concerning his status, but so far as an Anglo-Indian is concerned he is not prevented from joining an organization which can deal with his political status ?—I think you must refer to Government for a reply to that question.

K-3235. Is this a case of racial discrimination ?—I should not think so. I am not aware that Indians have this disability. We are not a political organization and we have often stressed the fact. The Home Department ruling which enables us to deal with certain political matters affecting our economic welfare and condition applies equally to all communities.

K-3236. Will you take it from me it does not.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : You can verify that and let us have a note afterwards.

K-3237. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : In your memorandum dealing with the East Indian Railway, you make a very special charge against all Railway Unions ?—I do not ; I say “ most unions ”.

K-3238. You say that you realise that most Railway Unions as at present constituted are improperly constituted ; indecorous in their manner and unconstitutional in their methods, and that you therefore appreciate and support the action of the administration in refusing recognition of such organizations. Do you include the Eastern Bengal Railway Employees' Association in that category ?—It only refers to the East Indian Railway.

K-3239. Therefore this charge is applicable to other unions ?—I do not apply it myself. It might be applicable. I do not know.

K-3240. Do you know of any union to which this would be applicable outside the East Indian Railway and will you give me an instance ?—I should not care to give you an instance of one straight away, but I should be prepared at a later date to answer your question and give you particulars.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : I do not think we need press this point now. You will supply us with a statement on the point later on.

K-3241. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : In the memorandum relating to the Eastern Bengal Railway you say : “ This man would never have been accepted by the Public Service Commission, nor would he have passed the competitive examination, to evade which, however, he was admitted into the subordinate service as a Draftsman. Considerable outside influence, together with the fact that he held a teaching appointment in the Benares University, was further brought to bear in his favour ”. That is a very serious charge you are making against the Public Service Commission ; are you prepared to substantiate that charge ?—It is not a charge against the Public Service Commission. He was not recruited through the Public Service Commission ; that is our complaint.

K-3242. Are you prepared to substantiate the statement that considerable outside influence was brought to bear ?—Yes.

K-3243. Then will you furnish the Commission with a statement to that effect ?

*Sir Alexander Murray* : If you wish to say anything more you can send in a note, that will save time.

K-3244. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : In the memorandum with regard to the Eastern Bengal Railway referring to workshops, it shows that as far as foremen are concerned there are 14 Europeans, 5 Anglo-Indians and no Indians. Is this a case of racial discrimination not Anglo-Indian *versus* Indian, but Anglo-Indian *versus* European ?—Yes. I have already drawn attention to the position of the Indians ; that shows we are not antagonistic to the Indians.

K-3245. Would you be prepared to take your chance with the rest of the inhabitants of this country in view of the fact that you are statutory Indians ?—We have already accepted that.

K-3246. Then why did you say to the Chairman that you want special protection at present for the Anglo-Indians ?—Because we are Indians.

We want to contribute the maximum possible to the good of India and we want to be given a period of protection in order to equip ourselves. I am not asking for indefinite protection.

K-3247. The Anglo-Indian as compared with the Indian has the initial advantage of education and standard of life ?—He has the advantage of standard of life, but I think it is a disadvantage when his pay is being reduced and he cannot afford to maintain that standard of life.

K-3248. Is it not a fact that the Anglo-Indian is given preferential treatment by every Railway administration in the matter of his education ?—He may receive more in grants, but education costs him considerably more than it costs the Indian.

K-3249. If the Anglo-Indian has no initial advantage with regard to education, why should the Railway administration employ an Anglo-Indian in preference to an Indian ?—Because experience has taught the Railway administrations that academic education by itself is not of much value on a Railway.

K-3250. Do you mean to suggest that the Anglo-Indian is born with a railway engine in his blood ?—No, but he has lived in railway surroundings, and has therefore developed a special aptitude for railway work.

K-3251. *Col. Gidney* : An Anglo-Indian may not be born with a locomotive in his blood but he imbibes it and his aptitude with his milk, does he not ?—Yes.

K-3252. Are you aware that many Indian railwaymen are members of Railway Unions which are controlled and guided by politicians and that they are therefore violating the Government Servants' Conduct Rules ?—I believe so.

K-3253. When you spoke of the advantage of recruiting men who are the sons of railway employees, you were referring not only to Anglo-Indians but to Indians as well ?—Yes.

K-3254. You desire that that privilege should be given to all railway employees ?—Yes.

K-3255. When you drew attention to the comparative numbers of Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians who were employed as Foremen in the Railway Workshops your desire was to draw attention to the lack of appointment of Indians, a matter of which apparently the Indian Unions and witnesses had not been aware and that you have supplied them with that information ?—Yes.

K-3256. When you refer to the difference in employment as Foremen you are really referring to covenanted *versus* non-covenanted ?—Yes.

K-3257. Mr. Marston, you are a mail driver ; would you rather have at your side as a fireman a Bachelor of Arts or Matriculate student or a man with a strong arm ?—(*Mr. Marston*) : The man with a strong arm.

K-3258. Mr. Rigg, are you aware of any cases of victimization ? Did you experience any victimization when you tried to get information from the Anglo-Indian and domiciled European employees at Dhanbad for this

Commission ?—Were you threatened with the sack by a Railway official of the East Indian Railway at Dhanbad because you asked for the use of the European Institute to hold a meeting of the Association to obtain material for our memorandum ?—(*Mr. Rigg*) : I was.

K-3259. You have not been sacked ?—Not yet ; I may be.

K-3260. Mr. Marston, you are employed on the Bengal Nagpur Railway ; what are your conditions as to overtime ?—(*Mr. Marston*) : We are paid according to the time in the time-table, but not for the hours of work that we do.

K-3261. Mr. Backman, you have said in the memorandum that there is a great difference between the treatment of drivers and guards as far as overtime is concerned. You lose a lot in that way ?—(*Mr. Backman*) : Yes.

K-3262. Do you desire that both Indians and Anglo-Indians should be employed as ticket collectors on the B. N. Railway and that Anglo-Indians are not so employed to-day ?—Yes.

K-3263. Mr. Bastien, do you object to Europeans being covenanted from England ?—No, I do not.

K-3264. You welcome them coming ?—Yes, I welcome them as workers.

K-3265. Is it your objection that a young man of 25 or 30 years of age coming out covenanted from England because he receives a higher salary as an assistant foreman or a chargeman he is placed at the top of the cadre above senior Anglo-Indians and Indians ?—Yes.

K-3266. And blocks the promotion of all these senior men who are on a lower local rate ?—Yes.

K-3267. You consider that to be an injustice ?—Yes.

K-3268. Do you suggest as the remedy that the European covenanted workman should be given his position in the cadre on the same terms as an Indian or Anglo-Indian, *i.e.*, on the date he enters it, he be given the same substantive pay, the difference to his present pay being made up with an overseas allowance, as obtains with European officials ?—Yes.

K-3269. There should be no discrimination ?—No.

K-3270. Is it a fact that Anglo-Indians are very much in debt ?—Yes.

K-3271. To what do you think that is due ?—It is due to the extra expense of higher education which they have to bear and to the fact that their leave rules are so restricted.

K-3272. In 1926 were the rates of pay on the East Indian Railway revised ?—(*Mr. Cameron*) : Yes.

K-3273. Is it also a fact that in 1928 the rates of pay were again revised or as it is called co-ordinated ?—Yes.

K-3274. Was the difference in the cost of living as per Bombay Government " Labour Gazette " between 1926 and 1928 only 5 per cent. ?—Yes.

K-3275. You have shown in this table in the E. I. Railway memorandum that compared with the 1926 wages, the net result of the 1928 wages is that they have been substantially reduced from 50 per cent. to 10 per cent. ?—Yes.

K-3276. Do you think a ticket collector on Rs. 30 a month after deductions of Rs. 7 or Rs. 8 can clothe himself, feed himself and be a useful member of the Auxiliary Force ?—No, I do not.

K-3277. Then you think it is impossible to accept such wages ?—I do.

K-3278. As an Association representing the Domiciled Community employed on Railways you protest against the 1928 revised rates of pay ?—Yes.

K-3279. *Mr. Chatterjee* : Mr. Cameron, you have stated in your memorandum that junior and inefficient Indians have been recruited by the railway in preference to Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans because of pressure put upon the officers. Can you substantiate that statement ?—Yes : I can and if I am given an opportunity to do so I will. I say that in preference to Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans as a result of political pressure Indians have been given appointments for which they have not been fitted. I am prepared to substantiate that statement.

K-3280. That means that you throw an aspersion upon the administration in that you say they have appointed inefficient Indians who are not suitable for the posts ?—I do, and I do it deliberately with a full sense of responsibility.

K-3281. In the memorandum referring to the Bengal Nagpur Railway you have stated that Rs. 200 to Rs. 300 per month is a fortune to an Indian employee. What do you think would be a fortune to an Anglo-Indian or domiciled European ?—I am talking about an average Anglo-Indian and an average Indian who is employed in that particular capacity. A fortune to an Anglo-Indian employee would certainly be very much more than that : at any rate it would be Rs. 1,000 a month.

K-3282. You suggest that the cost of educating the children of an Indian employee is one-fifth or one-tenth the cost of education of Anglo-Indian children ?—Yes.

K-3283. What do you think would be the cost of educating an Indian employee's children in a boarding school ?—If an Indian child were educated in a European school of course the cost would be the same.

K-3284. Some European schools have Indian professors, for instance, St. Xaviers ?—Yes. My contention is that the standards of life of a community has a relationship to the cost of education of a child in a boarding school.

K-3285. Are you in a position to analyse the cost of living of an Anglo-Indian, of a domiciled European and of an Indian, of course excluding the drinking charges and gambling fees ?—I can give it even when drinking charges and gambling fees are included.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : You will send in a statement on that point.

K-3286. *Mr. Chatterjee* : And I hope you will also send in a list of junior inefficient Indians who have been provided with better posts in preference to Anglo-Indians ?—I shall be asked by the Secretary for all these figures and facts and I will substantiate everything I have said.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**Mr. P. H. MAFLIN, O.B.E., M.C., Agent, Mr. I. St. C. PRINGLE, Deputy Agent, Mr. A. H. JOSCELYNE, Locomotive Superintendent, Dr. H. SUHRAWARDY, Chief Medical Officer, Mr. H. N. PARKER, Officer on Special Duty, Mr. H. A. OUTHWAITE, Statistical Officer, Mr. V. P. BHANDARKAR, Welfare Officer, Mr. D. GHOSE, Assistant Traffic Superintendent, representatives of Eastern Bengal Railway.**

K-3287. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What railway experience have you had ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : I have had 23 years' experience. I have been Agent for 10 months. Before that I was Secretary to the Railway Board. (*Mr. Pringle*) : I have had 18 years' experience. (*Mr. Joscelyne*) : I have had 28 years' experience.

K-3288. Your Railway is State-owned and State-worked ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : Yes.

K-3289. The staff is something like 56,000 ?—About that.

K-3290. There is a distinction between those earning Rs. 250 a month and those earning less. How many are there drawing less than Rs. 20 or Rs. 30 ?—Less than Rs. 30 there are about 40,000.

K-3291. 50 per cent. of your labour comes from outside the Province of Bengal ?—Yes, from Bihar and Orissa, Punjab and to a small extent the U. P. This proportion is 60 per cent. for the locomotive department.

K-3292. We have had it suggested that the reason why so many people come from outside is that the wages offered are not sufficient to attract the local Bengali labour, and therefore you have to attract people from outside. Why ?—The up-country man is better for manual labour in most cases than the Bengali. He is more suitable for technical railway work, and it is for this reason that we recruit so many men from outside the Province of Bengal.

K-3293. You have a good deal of casual and seasonal labour in the jute season. Where do you get your seasonal labour ?—Chiefly local labour. It is the local labour which is really casual and seasonal, not the imported labour, as stated in the Memorandum.

K-3294. Is it not the case that when the harvesting season for jute is on, an amount of labour comes from Bihar and Orissa ?—Yes, a certain amount.

K-3295. Do you give a higher rate of wages for temporary men ?—No.

K-3296. It is immaterial whether it is seasonal or not, the pay, the inducement is just the same ?—Yes.

K-3297. When you select the labour what do you proceed on : physique only or what ?—Skilled labour is selected after being tested by the Foreman, but the District Officer has to approve of the selection and fix the rate of pay. Unskilled labour is selected largely on physique and general standard of intelligence.

K-3298. All your skilled labour is passed by the doctor ?—Yes.

K-3299. On what principle do you select the skilled and semi-skilled labour ?—On the approval of the District Locomotive Officer.

K-3300. Have you anything in the nature of an employment bureau for recruitment ?—No, we are too small a railway. We have staff selection committees functioning at the Head Office, and we intend to extend these selection committees to districts.

K-3301. In your memorandum you say that the rules regarding drivers, shunters and firemen have recently been revised and are pending the Railway Board sanction. Have you got the sanction ?—Yes, the Board have sanctioned the new rules, but they have not yet been accepted by the Audit.

K-3302. You make reference to a Personnel Branch.—We have just started that.

K-3303. Is it functioning ?—Yes. I have a statement here.

#### *Statement.*

Personnel work in the districts has been left unchanged. Each district office is responsible for its own personnel work.

At headquarters personnel work has been concentrated in a central Personnel Branch in the Agent's office. The head of this branch is a Deputy Agent acting directly under the orders of the Agent. The object of this centralization is to ensure uniformity in the treatment of all questions affecting the staff, such as constitution of selection boards, fixing of scales of pay, treatment of appeals, regulation of orders regarding discharges and dismissal, sports, welfare, elimination of racial discrimination, etc. The Deputy Agent will sit on all departmental selection committees at Headquarters and will make periodical inspections of District Offices to ensure that a uniform policy is being observed.

2. Heads of Departments will continue to deal with all matters affecting discipline, promotion and leave and definite powers have been delegated to them, but all cases lying within their powers of sanction will be submitted to them through the central personnel branch and the Personnel Officer who works under the Agent. By this means we hope to secure that Heads of Departments will pursue a common policy.

K-3304. We have had some discussion about the merits of organization in the different systems and we had evidence this morning of the union representatives who said they did not like a divisional organization. In

your experience which is the better system from the labour point of view ?—This is largely a matter of opinion. My own feeling, which is not shared by some of my own administrative officers, is that the divisional organization is more suitable than the departmental organization because under the former organization personnel work is co-ordinated in the divisions under one officer instead of being carried out by 5 or 6 separate District Officers. The argument against this is that the personal touch under the departmental system is lost. My considered opinion is that under present-day conditions, it is not a question of personal touch, but a business proposition. Now-a-days, with the great advance in labour problems and in the application of various regulations, it is desirable to have co-ordination and specialized knowledge in order to secure a uniform policy and a correct application of rules in personnel matters.

K-3305. Have you any views, Mr. Joscelyne ?—(*Mr. Joscelyne*) : I have no experience of the divisional organization, but I think that it will result in loss of personal touch.

K-3306. Are you making provision for representation of labour ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : I have carried through the principle of selection committees both at headquarters and districts. I am opposed to having representatives of the men on such committees.

K-3307. What is your idea about appointments to the staff, I mean promotions in your own staff and not going outside.—Generally speaking promotions are made from among our own staff and we only go outside when it is necessary to fill a specialist post for which suitable men are not available on the railway.

K-3308. You have special allowances in the case of unhealthy districts ?—Yes.

K-3309. What about the Dooars and Terai ? We are told they are unhealthy and you do not make special allowances there ?—(*Mr. Pringle*) : It rather looks as though we shall have to consider this.

K-3310. It has been put to us that there are special allowances for Assam but none for the Dooars and Terai, which are equally unhealthy. When an officer is retiring do you take into account the service of that particular officer in these unhealthy areas ?—While there are no special orders regulating transfer of a man from healthy to unhealthy districts, District Officers at their discretion do so in practice.

K-3311. For instance, you do not shorten the time in view of the fact that a man may have spent most of his service in such a station ?—No.

K-3312. Is that a reasonable proposition ?—He gets transferred from place to place.

K-3313. We have had a great deal of discussion on this question of "discharge" and "dismissal". Absence without leave for six days lays a man open to discharge ?—It all depends on the merits of each man's particular case and his length of service. Ordinarily a man is allowed a month's leave without pay. If he overstays that period, the question whether the overstay should be condoned or not is considered on its merits.



K-3314. Supposing a man does not get back after a month?—It all depends on the merits of the case. If a man is a good workman the chances are the officer in charge will exercise his discretion and overlook it. In the case of menials they are generally allowed a month's leave without pay.

K-3315. Yours is a small railway, and you have actually discharged from your workshop staff more than any other railway. You have discharged 7,500 workers. It rather strikes me that your discipline and leave are in the hands of the District Officers.—To a certain extent, but I do not know on what basis this figure of 7,500 has been calculated, and I would like to consider that.

K-3316. Except in the case of workmen and Foremen in the Locomotive Department they are granted leave up to 15 days?—Yes.

K-3317. Why should it be that in five years you have dismissed 7,500 men?—They were probably discharged as they had absented themselves for a long time.

K-3318. That applies to every body?—Yes, probably.

K-3319. The list of figures you have prepared of "discharges" shows that it does not apply to "dismissals"?—No. The Board are careful in discriminating between the use of the words "Discharge" and "Dismissal".

K-3320. Have District Officers power to dismiss or discharge?—They can discharge men with 10 years' service and under. There are some new rules from the Board dealing with workshops.

K-3321. I am talking about these.—In the Traffic Department the District Officer is not allowed to dismiss men.

K-3322. Discharge for inefficiency covers unfitness?—Yes.

K-3323. Supposing a man is discharged on reduction would he have the right of appeal?—Yes.

K-3324. Can a man from the shops appeal to the Locomotive Superintendent in charge of the shop?—He appeals to the officer who appointed him, and if his appeal is rejected then he has the right of appeal to the officer next above.

K-3325. Appeal must be within one month?—Yes.

K-3326. Supposing a worker works out his month's notice, you give him his month's pay?—Yes.

K-3327. If the average worker works out his month's notice, hoping for the best, and the best does not turn up, he has lost his right of appeal because the month of his notice has expired?—He could appeal the moment he is given notice.

K-3328. But they are always hoping?—Yet there is no reason why he should not appeal.

K-3329. No body lets him know that he has lost his right of appeal?—His Foreman will tell him that.

K-3330. If you do not know, how will his Foreman know?—The man knows quite clearly what the notice means.

K-3331. You give a man a charge sheet, and he must reply within three days, and if he does not?—We call on him for an explanation.

K-3332. What happens then ?—It may be treated as a case of discipline.

K-3333. And he may be dismissed ?—He is not dismissed until the whole thing is settled.

K-3334. You may withhold any appeal.—Yes.

K-3335. If you do, then lists have to be made up of appeals withheld. Can you show me any such list ?—No.

K-3336. Can you say how many times in your experience, Mr. Maffin, decisions have been reversed on appeal ?—Very few indeed, as far as I know.

K-3337. Can you give me figures within the past three years showing how many appeals have been reversed ?—I cannot say.

K-3338. Do you not keep a record ?—(*Mr. Pringle*) : No, each case is dealt with in a man's personal file.

K-3339. Do you recognize individual grievances of workers when dealing with unions ? We have heard that you are favourably disposed to unions.—Yes, I am favourably disposed to my own Union, and I have actually accepted certain complaints on individual grievances.

K-3340. Would you consider individual grievances put up by unions ?—I personally would not as a general practice. If the Agent of a railway had to deal with all such grievances he would have little time to do anything else but personnel work.

K-3341. You have a Personnel Office ?—Yes, when appeals come up, the Personnel Branch puts up the case direct to the head of the department if it is within his power to deal with it, and the head of the department disposes of it. If it is beyond the head of the department's power, the case is put up to the Deputy Agent and the Agent. By having one Personnel Branch at headquarters, uniformity of treatment of personnel cases is secured.

K-3342. As we go round India one of the things we find most grievances about, is insecurity of tenure and the possibility of discharge or dismissal, especially discharge, under a month's notice ; the great majority of workers are given what they call insecurity of tenure. You are under the new rules making provision for appeals ?—Yes.

K-3343. You admit that men are illiterate and you give them three days to reply. Would you be prepared to agree that a union could help the worker to state his case ?—I do not accept that because it would put the union in a position to criticise the orders passed by the District Officer.

K-3344. Before the District Officer dismisses a man, when the charge sheet is presented, would you agree that the workman should have the assistance of his union to enable him to state his case ?—I am afraid I would not. The result would be that the District Officer would discharge nobody. The District Officer carries a heavy burden of work and, if he has to deal with these cases on these lines, he would take the line of least resistance and avoid discharging even incompetent men. The workmen's welfare officer is in closer touch with the men, he can discuss matters with the District Officer ; I do not wish to introduce a foreign body without any responsibility to negotiate with District Officers.

K-3345. You agree that unions may be of some use ?—Yes, if they are properly administered and properly run.

K-3346. How can they be of better use than in helping a man who may be dismissed to prepare his case prior to dismissal and before the views of the officer who may dismiss him have crystallized ? It has been repeatedly said to us that, after a junior officer has dismissed a man, it is very difficult for his senior officer to reverse that decision and you yourself have just told me that it is very seldom that a decision is reversed on appeal. As we go round, we find that the chief cause for complaint amongst the work-people is this fear of dismissal and the feeling that nothing can be done after the decision has been taken. If you are in favour of helping unions to function, what better things can you suggest that a union can do than help a worker to state his case ?—The first thing that unions in this country must do is to organize themselves and understand first of all the implications of their own demands. They must try to get some realization of the responsibility of administration ; it is no good the union fighting every man's case merely because they are afraid of losing membership.

K-3347. You tell us that you practically never reverse decisions on appeal ; it would therefore appear that you would be right every time ?—If the unions were represented on these committees, it would take an extraordinarily long time to deal with a single case. I should like to see unions develop a little more.

K-3348. We were told yesterday that in Cooch Behar State the Workmen's Compensation Act does not function, that, as a matter of fact, some body had been injured in that territory, but that the railway avoided responsibility under the Workmen's Compensation Act or otherwise because the accident took place in a State where the Workmen's Compensation Act does not apply.—(Mr. Pringle) : We give an *ex gratia* payment. (Mr. Maflin) : I should be prepared to give exactly the same compensation as though it were under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

K-3349. We were told this morning by the representatives of the workmen that in that case the injured man got nothing.—We will look into that.

K-3350. I understand it is the fact that he has no legal right.—Yes, but that would not stand in the way. (Mr. Joscelyne) : The number of appeals received from the workshops during the last six months was 60 ; there were 73 from the running staff.

Sir Alexander Murray : If I had known that, I might not have asked the same questions.

K-3351. Col. Gidney : Were those decisions reversed on appeal ?—I cannot say.

K-3352. Mr. Cliff : As Agent of this particular railway have you any suggestions to put before the Commission with regard to promoting good relationship between yourself and the workers under your jurisdiction ?—(Mr. Maflin) : We have started by reorganizing our head office with a view to securing uniformity in all matters affecting the staff. In the next place, we have appointed a welfare officer whose duty will be to act as *ex-officio* chairman of district welfare committees. At the moment I have not quite made up my mind whether to adopt the Bombay, Baroda and Central India

Railway principle, to make welfare committees entirely unofficial, that is representative of the men, or to let them be guided by an officer as chairman. My provisional feeling is that they should be representative of the men, the welfare officer being *ex-officio* chairman. Through the medium of these committees, we hope to enable the men to bring up their individual grievances on any such points affecting them as may arise; we hope that, in the course of time, a better feeling may be created between the men and their district officers and between the administration and the men, because the welfare officer would be working directly under the Agent as part of his organization.

K-3353. Is the welfare officer independent of the departmental chiefs?—He will be under the Agent and, to that extent, he will act as a liaison between the men and the departmental chiefs; he will be an official.

K-3354. Will he be independent; will he be of a higher status?—No. He will rank as a District Officer under the Deputy Agent and would have direct access to the Agent. If he thinks the decision of the head of a department or of a District Officer in a particular case does not conform with the Agent's policy, he will put it up to the Agent and take his orders.

K-3355. Does that spell out your policy in dealing with your work-people?—At the present moment we have 16 Indian institutes and we have institutes in workshops where the Works Managers take a very keen interest in the welfare and amenities of the men. There is a very good feeling between the men and the works management.

K-3356. The two questions which the men are urging in their memoranda are wages and working hours. In what way do you propose that the men should have an opportunity of making their representations in an organized form, being able to discuss with the administration the settlement of these questions?—On a big question like wages or housing, I should have no objection to meeting my union once a quarter and discussing these things round the table; then they would put forward their point of view and I would explain to them the implications of their point of view: how much it is going to cost and how much we can afford. In that way we shall probably be in a position to analyse their demands and meet the most urgent needs in the first instance. Though we have housed 35 per cent. of our men, I realise that one of the difficulties on this railway is with regard to housing. I have already started a programme with a view to meet the needs of the men in order of urgency.

K-3357. Is that in consultation with the union?—I do not see how they can help us very much there, because they cannot know the position of every station in the same way as we do. I have told every District Officer to put up his demands which will be co-ordinated at headquarters. Headquarters will then put up their requirements to the Agent and the Agent will have to decide. I do not see how the unions can possibly help us there, because they have not the facilities for overlooking the whole railway.

K-3358. Surely there is in a sense a conflict of interests between the ordinary rank and file workmen and the officer of the railway?—In what sense?

K-3359. As a man of the world, I suppose you would generally accept it that the workmen on the railway would feel that they are better able to express their views through an organized body rather than through a

railway official?—It is a curious commentary on the Kanchrapara Workmen's Union that out of a total strength of about 6,000 the strength of the union is about 375. We have a British Works Manager who is extremely popular and I say quite definitely that the men would rather go to him than to any organization. (*Mr. Joscelyne*) : We tried to start shops committees but they would not function, because the men would not elect their delegates and when their delegates were nominated, they would not go to them ; they preferred to go direct to the Foreman and the Works Manager.

K-3360. I am trying to see whether I can gauge accurately the mind of the railway administration in regard to trade unions. Am I to take it that, as far as you are concerned, dealing with the situation as it exists at the moment, you believe that the best policy to pursue in relation to the workmen is to deal with these matters through your own departmental officers and through welfare committees which you initiate?—(*Mr. Maslin*) : This administration is not opposed to trade unions provided they are properly administered and controlled and worked by members of the staff, that they have a real interest in the men themselves and try to realise the implications of their demands with particular reference to the responsibilities of the administration for efficient and businesslike work. In other words their views must not be one-sided. At present we cannot say that our unions function with any real sense of responsibility or discrimination. They are improving in this respect and are fairly moderate, and reasonable but require greater experience. They are apt to concentrate more on the grievances of individuals than on the larger matters. There is still a good deal of apathy particularly among the workshop men. We recognize that under modern industrial conditions trade unions will grow in strength. We also recognize that from the workmen's point of view it is desirable that there should be some representation of the workmen to challenge any particular act or acts of the administration or the executive. If they exercise their functions with a proper sense of responsibility there is no reason why they should not be a help to the administration. This administration is strongly of the opinion that whether unions exist or not it is desirable to extend the Welfare side of their activities, so as to bring the administration and executive into closer touch with the real grievances and the needs of the men and to develop a spirit of sport and of good relationship between the officers and their staff. By this means it is hoped to bring about such a feeling of general contentment as will satisfy the men that their needs are being cared for as far as is practicable. Welfare work should be carried on quite independently of the unions, because there is ample scope for both organizations and they could be helpful to each other.

K-3361. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Our difficulty is this : How can you bring home to the workers that the union is any use, if the union can never get into close touch with you, so as to be able to go back to the workers and say : ' Here is something we have done for you '. Apparently you intend to arrange that everything shall be done by yourself and the welfare officers?—I think if our welfare committees function properly, the men will begin to appreciate the advantages of collective bargaining. My feeling is that they have not yet got that sense.

K-3362. *Mr. Cliff* : The unions have to make a start ; are they going to have adequate opportunities through your welfare committees?—They work concurrently with the welfare committees.

K-3363. Do you think the trade union should be consulted with regard to the constitution and functions of your welfare committees?—No, but there would be no objection to members of the trade union getting on to the welfare committees.

K-3364. That is a method which is often adopted by employers who favour what are called 'company unions' which are often run in opposition to a trade union.—We are not a Company railway; we are a State railway.

K-3365. I mean that it may be an employers' union. You have a union which is admittedly not fully representative, admittedly new, with all the difficulties that come with childbirth; but are you, as an Agent, prepared to take this union into consideration and consultation right through in dealing with all questions arising out of their employment?—Do you mean bigger questions or questions affecting the individual?

K-3366. I would take general questions. In your memorandum you speak of accepting responsibility for the general conditions under which the men work. If a number of men working on your railway begin to organize themselves into a body and they are to determine the conditions and accept responsibility, are you going to deal with them in an organized manner?—I am not responsible for that. As a matter of fact, those traffic welfare committees do not function properly and were not a success, because the District Officer was the head of the Committee and very often the questions that were brought up were beyond his powers; therefore the men thought that they could not get anything done through the committees and said that the committees were no good. Since I have been here for 10 months, everything has been addressed directly to me.

K-3367. We have had evidence this morning that, with a change in the Agent, things have been easier for the union, but the objection is raised that many difficulties are placed in their way by departmental chiefs.—That is not so.

K-3368. The Railway Board advise us that the Agents have freedom to deal with these matters. In visualizing your policy for the next 10 years, are you proposing to take the union as it is, constituted as it is, and act in conjunction with that union in matters arising out of employment?—I should be quite prepared to meet any union, say, once a quarter, and discuss any big matters that they can put up. As the result of representation from the union and, of course, my own knowledge of the position on the line, I have already made up my mind as to directions in which we should try, in the first place, to mitigate the limitations under which men suffer with regard, for instance, to housing, the pay of the lowest paid classes and then of the lower-paid literate classes. Our finance is limited and we can only spare a certain amount without failing in our interest charges; therefore we must walk warily. There the union can help us by telling us where the shoe pinches most; we should be glad to discuss that with the union. But in actual practice the union if I may say so, in order to conserve its membership, puts forward the appeal of any body who has something to say, with the result that we are inundated with work. On the whole however, our union has been reasonable and moderate; they have tried to be helpful.

K-3369. Your memorandum, I think, says that your particular union is not sufficiently virile.—That memorandum was written in a great hurry.

K-3370. Taking the low-paid workmen on your railway—and I use that term advisedly—are you prepared to meet the union and even place a measure of responsibility on the representatives of the union, so that they do not become “froth blowers” and that you are prepared to meet them in that way in order that a difficult problem which every body has to face may be disposed of in the easiest possible way?—If I brought the members of the union round a table and discussed this problem with them, this is what would happen : I should say that I could only spare so many lakhs of rupees for this particular purpose. The representatives of the union would come to the table with definitely fixed ideas as to what the minimum wage should be. If I suggest Rs. 13, they would probably have been told to ask for Rs. 15. I cannot give way and they are afraid to give way. The result would be that I should do what I should have done in any case but should have made my union hostile ; that is the difficulty.

K-3371. You seem to have formed a perfectly firm conviction beforehand.—Because I want to be fair and we know our limitations.

K-3372. This particular union has come to the Commission and made suggestions with regard to housing ; why may they not make those suggestions to you in order that they may be discussed in a businesslike manner?—(*Mr. Pringle*) : If I remember rightly, the Agent asked them for their views on different staff quarters, some two or three years ago. What became of that, I do not know.

K-3373. I want to see whether this Commission, the union and yourself, can look forward to a policy of co-operation in dealing with the many difficult problems that face the work-people and the Agent of a railway?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : As I said before I think it is rather anticipating things ; until the union has developed and shown that it is in a position to take a responsible view of these things, I think it will only make things more difficult for the Agent. There is no reason why we should not have discussions. But when we come down to the details of administration, working our scales of pay and that sort of thing, I certainly think that, if you bring the union in to frame the scales of pay, you will never get finality, unless you take a definite decision yourself.

K-3374. Here is a large body of men in India demanding that the present subsistence level shall be raised ; a section of these men are new ; are you saying to the men and to the public in India that the final decision on that matter rests with you?—Not necessarily with me, but if we put up our scales of pay to the lowest paid classes, we shall have to consider the effect on our own revenues and on the industrial market generally.

K-3375. May questions like that be put before a properly constituted wage-board on which the unions are represented and on which the administration is represented?—The difficulty would be that we know exactly how much we can spend and we know we have got to balance our accounts every year.

K-3376. I suppose the railway companies in England know that, but they have put these questions before a board upon which they are not the deciding factor.—Yes, but I think it is a different position ; I think you will find that in this country the average trade union representative does not take the same unbiassed point of view that, the British trade union representative would take, because trade unionism is of comparatively recent growth in this country.

K-3377. I understand you have men who are on call for many hours. I think it is called 'intermittent employment'. Have you intermittent duty spread over 24 hours for certain work-people on your railway?—I think, in the case of certain Guards and Drivers we have. (*Mr. Parker*) : In the case of single men posted at stations where the work is very heavy, there is intermittent duty spread over 24 hours.

K-3378. A railway workman the other day told me that he was on call for 24 hours on 365 days in the year. Do you give that class of worker any annual holiday with pay?—All menial labour can get 15 days' casual leave in the year.

K-3379. I understand that certain men may have leave on pay provided it does not increase the total costs.—(*Mr. Maflin*) : Yes, provided there is no extra expense.

K-3380. Do you think that is reasonable?—(*Mr. Pringle*) : The whole question is under consideration by the Board.

K-3381. "Under consideration" is a very convenient phrase. The Railway Board told us that the Agent has no power to increase the pay of any one grade above the cost of Rs. 25,000 per annum.—(*Mr. Maflin*) : That is right.

K-3382. Have you any recommendation to make to the Railway Board with regard to the weekly rest day?—At the present moment an officer is on special duty going into the whole question of the rules as to hours of work and we propose to apply the Washington and Geneva Conventions.

K-3383. Can you give me any idea when?—The Bill has not yet been passed by the Legislative Assembly.

K-3384. You can pass that burden to the Assembly.—Yes.

K-3385. Is there any proposal to reduce the total weekly hours on your railway?—Yes; we are proposing to apply the Washington Convention which will entail a sixty hours week. We should give effect to the Washington and Geneva Conventions whenever we can. As a matter of fact, we are trying to give effect to these Conventions now. I am afraid it will probably cause a certain amount of dissatisfaction, because the men do not like being put on a roster.

K-3386. That is a big general question; is that being discussed with the union?—No; I do not know that they could help us very much there. If I may say so, you are assuming that the unions are in a position to carry the men with them. But I am rather inclined to think they are not. My own feeling is that when we get the welfare committees going properly and the men understand what trade unionism means, then the unions will develop, but the two must go on concurrently for a while.

K-3387. You say "concurrently"; will you say "in conjunction with"?—No, not at present.

K-3388. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Have you seen the memorandum handed in to the Commission by the Union of the Eastern Bengal Railway?—I have.

K-3389. Will you look at the supplementary memorandum relating to racial discrimination. Do you agree with that statement?—No, I do not



I will say at once that on the Eastern Bengal Railway we would never tolerate any racial discrimination.

K-3390. It says " Europeans and Anglo-Indians are recruited at the higher, if not the highest, rung of the ladder and the Indians always at the lowest."—That is a very sweeping statement.

K 3391. Is that generally true ?—No, it is quite wrong.

K-3392. It says : " In the Locomotive Department the wide difference in the rates of wages of European and Indian running staff will be clear from the following table."—That has been superseded now by the revised rules which put them into three classes, I, II and III. This document shows what we are now doing :—

" There are three classes of Drivers :—

Class (1).—Illiterate running staff and those who draw the English Test Allowance.

Class (2).—Literate class not below the Matriculation or 6th standard.

Class (3).—Running staff of special merit.

The class to which an applicant is first appointed will depend entirely on his qualifications.

Class to class promotion will depend entirely on qualifications and selection.

#### *Drivers.*

2. (a) Drivers will be paid as follows :—

	Class III	Class II	Class I	
	per month.	per month.	per month.	
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1st year	.. 140	90	34	} Ordinary grade increments are given for approved service.
2nd year	.. 150	100	36	
3rd year	.. 160	110	38	
4th year	.. 170	120	42	
5th year	.. 180	130	46	
6th year	.. 190	140	50	
7th year	.. 200	150	54	
8th year	.. 200	150	54	} Special grade.
9th year	.. 200	150	54	
10th year	.. 210	160	58	
11th year	.. 210	160	58	
12th year	.. 220	170	62	

2. (b) *Special grade*.—A driver may be promoted to the special grade only after three years' approved service on the highest pay of the ordinary grade and to the higher pay of the special grade after two years' approved service on the lower pay of the special grade.

(c) Approved service means :—

- (i) That the driver has had no serious offence recorded against him during the previous 12 months.
- (ii) That his consumption of fuel and oil for the last twelve months has not been above average of his Section.
- (iii) That his attendance has been regular.
- (iv) That he has kept good time with trains.

(d) The number of drivers in the special grades of each class shall not exceed 25 per cent. of the total number of employed in that class. In selecting men in Class I for promotion to the special grade preference will be given to those who are in receipt of the English Test Allowance referred to in Rule 3 below.

3. (a) *English test allowance.*—An allowance of Rs. 5 per month will be granted to Class I drivers who can read and understand the rules in English and who can draft intelligible reports in the same language. This test will be made by a gazetted officer. Drivers are also recruited from shunters subject to the following conditions :—

A shunter in Classes II and III may not sit for the drivers' examination unless he has done six months' actual shunting, which may be made up of broken periods. After passing the drivers' examination and on reaching the highest pay of his class, a further service of six months is necessary before he can be permanently promoted to driver.

A shunter in Class I must put in at least twelve months' actual shunting, which may be made up of broken periods, before sitting for drivers' examination, and after passing the drivers' examination, he must serve for another two years and reach the highest pay of his class before he is eligible for permanent promotion to driver.

No shunter in Class I shall be passed as a driver unless he can read code initials, train and private numbers and dates and is fully competent to work with line clears and tokens.

A shunter will not be promoted to the highest pay of his class unless he has passed the drivers' examination. The services of any shunter who fails to pass the drivers' examination within five years of confirmation will be dispensed with.

A shunter (passed driver) working as a driver will be paid at the lowest rate of a driver of the corresponding class and will be paid overtime allowance on the scale as laid down for drivers.

#### *Shunters.*

Shunters' rates of pay are as follows :—

	Class III	Class II	Class I	
	per month.	per month.	per month.	
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1st year	.. 100	60	23	} For approved service.
2nd year	.. 100	70	25	
3rd year	.. ..	80	27	

K-3393. Taking Class III Drivers, will you give me figures of recruitment during the last three years ?—(*Mr. Joscelyne*) : We have no Indians in Class III at present, the difficulty being that we cannot get educated Indians to take up this class of work ; they have to start low down as firemen ; we have now made a start and we have 12 Indians in Class II. It is, of course, a matter of evolution.

K-3394. Will you give me the figures for recruitment in Class III during 1929 ?—I have not got the figures here now.

K-3395. Was there not a single Indian working on your Railway who was fit to enter Class III ?—Yes.

K-3396. Unfit from what point of view ?—Efficiency, qualifications and ability.

K-3397. Who decides that ?—The head of the department decides finally ; it starts with the Foreman, then the District Officer and finally the head of the department.

K-3398. You are revising the system and saying that recruitment shall be through the Staff Selection Board ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : That is our idea, we have not yet thought out the scheme in detail.

K-3399. What would be the organization of the Staff Selection Board according to the scheme you have thought of ?—In the Locomotive Department I suppose the Deputy Locomotive Superintendent and the Deputy Agent will be on all these committees.

K-3400. So that instead of having individuals like the District Officer and the head of the department, you will have three or four officers of a type similar to those who in the past have not been able to discover a single Indian capable of entering Class III.—(*Mr. Maflin*) : It is not a question of race at all ; it is a question of fitness to do a particular job. It takes a little time for things to develop ; Indian Drivers are now improving and there is no reason why that improvement should not continue ; it is merely a question of time. The personnel of the Audit and Accounts Service is almost wholly composed of one community because that particular community has definite qualifications for that kind of work. Our intention is to have a proper selection committee to remove patronage or racial discrimination.

K-3401. Have you ever thought of having an independent body or a body on which there shall be representatives of the workers' union who would be members of that body ?—No ; I should be opposed to it.

K-3402. Would you consider an independent body ?—No, because they are not responsible for the efficient administration of the railway.

K-3403. You are opposed to the principle of having an independent body engaged in the task of recruitment ?—Yes.

K-3404. Have you at any time sent up to the Railway Board any objection to the recruitment of your higher salaried officers through the Public Service Commission ?—That is outside my province ; if the Railway Board think the Public Service Commission is a suitable body, that is entirely their responsibility ; I am a servant of the Government of India.

K-3405. The Public Service Commission does recruit ?—Yes.

K-3406. The Public Service Commission is an outside independent body ?—Yes.

K-3407. Have you had any complaint in regard to the quality of the personnel recruited by the Public Service Commission ?—It is a little early to speak ; they have only been functioning for three years.

K-3408. During those three years have you had any complaints about any officer recruited by the independent body known as the Public Service Commission ?—(*Dr. Suhrawardy*) : I have definite cause to complain of recruitment by the Public Service Commission for technical appointments without being helped by a technical man from the department concerned. I had one rather bad result from their selection.

K-3409. *Colonel Gidney* : But there is always a technical man.—He can only advise and his advice may be brushed aside because he is not a member of the Commission. I say in answer to the question that the selection referred to has not been good. It is not a fair proposition that recruitment should be done by a body like a union which is not responsible for the efficient discharge of the work. That system will not be a success.

K-3410. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Have you any suggestions to make as to a system which would be satisfactory to all parties ?—(*Mr. Maftin*) : I doubt if you would ever do that. My own feeling is that you must make sure that you adopt the right policy and see that that policy is carried out fairly and squarely. If the administration and the District Officer have the same policy you will get far better results than by introducing an independent body or association to select your staff for you.

K-3411. Have you ever consulted the Union in regard to the change in the method of recruitment that you are advocating ?—No.

K-3412. Would you agree with me that the question of recruitment vitally affects your staff ?—It certainly does.

K-3413. Would it not therefore be better to consult members of the Union before you put recommendations before the Railway Board ?—I have already explained to Mr. Cliff that the Union would not view the problem from the same angle as the administration would ; they are not in a position to do so.

K-3414. The object of consultation is to get different opinions ?—I quite agree, but then you may have some body coming forward with preconceived ideas whereas the only preconceived idea of the administration is to get the best man for the particular post.

K-3415. Have you ever consulted the Union in order to find out whether they have a preconceived idea ?—No.

K-3416. On the Eastern Bengal Railway Indians after having passed the apprenticeship examination are appointed at a salary of Rs. 80 a month.—Yes.

K-3417. And at what salary is an Anglo-Indian appointed for the same work ?—(*Mr. Joscelyne*) : Rs. 150, but it is a question of supply and demand.

K-3418. Is it the policy of your administration to give an Anglo-Indian a wage according to supply and demand ?—There is another

factor : An Anglo-Indian can take charge at once while an Indian requires training because he has not the necessary drive and does not carry weight.

K-3419. Is that a general charge that you are making against every Indian that he has not the necessary drive and therefore cannot be paid Rs. 150 but that an Anglo-Indian has the necessary drive and therefore must be paid Rs. 150 ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : No, I do not think you can generalize like that.

K-3420. What are the specific grounds on which you would give Rs. 150 to an Anglo-Indian and Rs. 80 to an Indian holding the same post ?—If you want a man for any particular job and you find that by paying less than Rs. 150 you get a man of a quality which does not give efficient work it is no good having him at all. It is really a business proposition. If an Indian with the same qualifications came to me, I should not have the slightest hesitation in giving him Rs. 150. The Anglo-Indian has a natural aptitude for certain classes of work for which they have been trained by tradition and upbringing. It is not a case of racial discrimination.

K-3421. May I take it therefore that the main criterion in selecting recruits is whether a man has the aptitude or not ?—That is one of the criteria. An Anglo-Indian will not come for a lower rate; at any rate a suitable type of Anglo-Indian will not.

K-3422. If the work is worth Rs. 150, is it not fair to pay that sum to both the Indian and the Anglo-Indian doing similar work ?—Not indiscriminately. In all the services we have Indian officers getting precisely the same pay as Anglo-Indian and European officers.

K-3423. Is it that the standard of life of the Anglo-Indian and European is higher than that of the Indian and therefore you give the European and the Anglo-Indian Rs. 150 and the Indian Rs. 80 ?—(*Mr. Pringle*) : It is rather more than that ; I understand that they do not do the same work.

K-3424. You have two men with the same qualifications doing the same work. One is put into one class and the other into another, the difference being pay and nothing else ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : It all depends on the expression "the same qualifications". (*Mr. Joscelyne*) : They do not do exactly the same work ; the Anglo-Indian can be put in charge of the staff at once while the Indian cannot.

K-3425. In your memorandum you say that the cost of a daily diet consisting of certain articles of a good quality in Calcutta would be about six annas. Where did you get that figure ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : We had to work it out ourselves.

K-3426. How did you prepare this budget ?—It is not very scientific.

K-3427. Might there be a variation of a couple of annas ?—Yes.

K-3428. If you take the case of a man, his wife and two children, regarding that as being equivalent to three adults, if you allow six annas per day for each adult, that would come to one rupee and two annas per day for food ?—I have not worked this out on any scientific basis ; it is only a very rough estimate. Though you may say a man requires

six annas, most people would not have more than three or four annas and yet they live.

K-3429. If I take the figure of four annas that would come to 12 annas for the family and that would not provide for such luxuries as *ghee* or milk. Again I find from your memorandum, that there are wages of Rs. 9 rising to Rs. 11 per month, Rs. 11 rising to Rs. 16, Rs. 12 rising to Rs. 17 and Rs. 13 rising to Rs. 17. If you take the cost of food as four annas per adult, how is it possible for a man to live and support his wife and two children on wages of Rs. 11, Rs. 12 or Rs. 13 per month?—But he does live.

K-3430. Yes, but have you ever considered how he lives?—That is connected with the general economic position of the country.

K-3431. As an employer of labour, do you not think the duty devolves upon you to find out exactly what is a living wage?—What is the meaning of that expression “a living wage”? If I went to Italy and asked an Italian labourer what a living wage was and what he was getting, I should discover a very great disparity.

K-3432. When you give a European Rs. 150 a month and an Indian Rs. 80, you do it on the basis that you are giving them both a living wage. Has it ever occurred to you to consider whether you are giving these other people a living wage?—What we try to do is to give a wage for which we can get our labour, a wage relative to economic conditions generally. If I gave every labourer one rupee extra that would mean six lakhs of rupees a year. If I do that, in a little while I should not be in a position to pay any body because I should go into liquidation.

K-3433. What profit did you make last year?—Eleven lakhs.

K-3434. So that you would not go into liquidation if you pay every labourer another rupee?—But I might be asked to give two or three rupees and I might also be required to build more houses and that sort of thing. We have to cut our coat according to our cloth.

K-3435. Do you think the coat could be cut at the top?—If I reduced the salaries, my efficiency would be reduced.

K-3436. The point is that so far as the Agent, the Deputy Agent and superior officers are concerned, they draw high salaries while I take it there are thousands of your workers who are living on a wage less than Rs. 25 a month?—There are 40,000 on less than Rs. 30 a month.

K-3437. In your memorandum you say “scales of wages are incremental and are fixed in accordance with the class and the responsibility of the work and have in the past been based on the principle of supply and demand”?—I think it must come to that in the long run; it must be related to the general economic conditions in the country.

K-3438. *Mr. Cliff*: Except that you are indicating a change of policy in the next paragraph.—I have definitely put forward proposals; I am trying to give them a little more out of the money I can spare.

K-3439. *Diwan Chaman Lall*: What has the administration done during the last four years since the formation of the Union to help the Union to develop and become a responsible body with which you could

deal as you desire to do ?—May I reply to that with another question : what have the British Railway administrations done to help the British Trade Unions ?

*Mr. Cliff* : They have put them on many advisory bodies.

K-3440. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : They have co-operated with them in many ways in regard to their conditions of labour.—They have not tried to develop them.

K-3441. But that is one of the ways in which you try to develop a union ?—In England the men built up Trade Unions ; in India we have gone a little too quickly and we are legislating for unions. I think it is a question of the members of the unions being educated so as to understand what collective bargaining means and I think that by means of our welfare committee and by means of the contact of the welfare officer with the unions they will gradually develop.

K-3442. Members of unions living in various centres require to meet and discuss Union business ; do you allow them free passes ?—No.

K-3443. Do you allow them leave apart from the leave which is ordinarily due to them ?—No.

K-3444. Do you allow them any other facilities ?—They can meet in our Institute buildings.

K-3445. Is it a fact that you used to give them passes ?—Yes.

K-2446. And you used to give them leave as well ?—(*Mr. Pringle*) : We used to give them leave to attend Union meetings away from Calcutta. The Railway Board stopped the passes.

K-3447. We have been told in the memorandum submitted by the Union that the police attend the union meetings and take verbatim reports of the proceedings ?—(*Mr. Maslin*) : I have never heard of it.

K-3448. Do any of these reports find their way to you or to any other officer ?—I have never had anything confidential if that is what you mean. The police have never supplied me with anything confidential. Anything I have had has come direct from the Union itself. (*Mr. Pringle*) : They are entitled to 48 passes a year and there is no reason why they should not use any number. They get these passes in addition to the Bazaar passes.

K-3449. *Colonel Russell* : Dr. Suhrawardy, what is your length of service in railway employment ?—(*Dr. Suhrawardy*) : About 14 years and 22 years in Government service.

K-3450. How long have you been on the Eastern Bengal Railway ?—About two years ; previous to that I was on the East Indian Railway as District Medical Officer.

K-3451. In your memorandum it is stated “ it is the policy of the Railway to provide staff with suitable accommodation ”. What is exactly meant by that ?—Suitable accommodation means accommodation which is healthy and to which men are accustomed. There are, of course, different types ; there is the European and the Indian style. We do not want to force the people to use a particular type of house ; we give

each man a type which is suitable, to which he is accustomed and in which he feels comfortable and at home.

K-3452. You give 18 details of quarters for subordinate Indian staff. S is one room with verandah and courtyard and R is one room without courtyard. What are the dimensions of these rooms ?—These prints give the details (producing prints).

K-3453. The details of R type are given in the memorandum of the Union as being one main room 10 feet by 9 feet, that being the floor space ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : That is about right.

K-3454. Do you consider that is suitable accommodation for a family ?—(*Dr. Suhrawardy*) : No, but we have a proposal for married and unmarried quarters. If a man lives by himself it is all right but there is a different type for married people. R type has not got a verandah ; it is used outside the station limits where we have tried to approximate the type to the conditions that obtain in the villages by that class of people.

K-3455. Do you consider it suitable ?—From the idealistic point of view no, but looking at it from the point of view of what these people are used to we are giving them something better than they have in villages. I think Mr. Chatterjee will agree with me about that.

*Mr. Chatterjee* : I am afraid I cannot agree with you.

K-3456. *Colonel Russell* : In the memorandum of the Trade Union it is suggested that the height of the plinths of these quarters is insufficient. Have you received any complaints on that matter ?—Yes.

K-3457. Are they justified ?—In certain cases where these complaints have either been received or these defects have been noticed by me or my staff we have brought it to the notice of the Engineering Department and it has been remedied ; in the newer types the plinth is higher. Bengal being damp and water logged, it is very necessary to have a high plinth.

K-3458. In your annual report for last year, you say the condition of running rooms and housing of the staff requires amelioration to bring about better health and better mental and moral conditions of the working classes. What recommendations have you made with a view to improving these conditions ?—Where we know that so many come and use a certain running room we have recommended that the dimensions should be commensurate with the number of people that are expected to use it ; that is to say, the size should be increased according to needs. Wherever power is available, I have recommended that we should have electric lights and fans and that has been adopted. I have also recommended mosquito nets and they are supplied in running rooms. On these railways, we try to give in the running rooms comfort which these people do not get in their own houses.

K-3459. Again you say : “ Bathrooms, kitchens and latrines are provided and the standard designs legislate for the best type of quarter being constructed ”. How many standard designs have you got and what is the cost ?—(*Agent's Circular No. 4* was handed in).

K-3460. In your memorandum there is a table giving the average number of days lost per annum owing to certified sickness. You will



see that the figures for staff drawing more than Rs. 30 per month is more than twice the figure with regard to staff drawing less than Rs. 30 per month. Is that difference due to the fact that the lower paid men cannot get leave?—It is due to the fact that the lower paid men are in some cases unsophisticated; they do not report sick and keep on the sick list by means of outside certificates as do certain of the staff whom I may call literate or crafty or sophisticated. The audit department people who know all the tricks of the trade report sick more than any other department, the number of days lost by them being the greatest. Our Railway is the most unhealthy of all the railways.

K-3461. The Union says that one class of workers cannot go to the doctor except by permission of an officer?—The doctor is always available and the hospital doors are open day and night for every body. If a man is on duty and becomes ill he is to go to the man immediately supervising his work, report sick and say he is going to the doctor. That is quite a different thing from saying he cannot see the doctor.

K-3462. The allegation is that the Station Master refuses to give them a memorandum to go to the doctor?—(*Mr. Maslin*) : In the past there may have been that system but certainly now-a-days the Assistant Surgeon and the Sub-Assistant Surgeon are always within call. It is the first time I have heard that allegation.

K-3463. *Mr. Cliff* : But what is the position if there is no relief available and the Station Master refuses to let the man go?—(*Dr. Suhrawardy*) : Some men who report sick are capable of going to the doctor. If a man is so ill that he cannot go to the doctor, the doctor comes to him. On this Railway we have a system of travelling Sub-Assistant Surgeons who have definite areas allotted to them.

K-3464. *Colonel Russell* : Until the Sub-Assistant Surgeon arrives, does the Station Master insist on the man remaining on duty?—If he did so, he would be very severely dealt with because a sick man would be unable to deal with signals or do any other responsible work.

K-3465. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Suppose a man becomes ill when he is off duty. What is the practice with regard to getting certificates from outside medical practitioners?—If an employee lives within two miles radius of a railway dispensary, and is fit to travel he goes to the doctor; if he is so ill that he cannot leave his bed, the doctor comes to him. If he lives outside that two miles radius he can get any doctor he likes and if that doctor is a registered medical practitioner we are bound to accept his certificate and we do accept it. Of course, there are exceptions; for instance, quite recently a man came to me who said he had been ill with malaria for 3 months. I looked at that man and saw that he was the picture of health. In cases of that kind we exercise our discretion.

K-3466. On your line at present there are 23 stations which are officially regarded as being unhealthy?—Yes.

K-3467. Is there any proposal to extend that number?—Yes, I have submitted to my Agent a number of other stations where special attention is necessary in order to combat malaria. Speaking from memory it is about 102 stations.

K-3468. Is the Agent prepared to consider that proposal favourably?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : Certainly ; within my means I will do all I can.

K-3469. You say : “ no special arrangements have been made in the past to transfer staff from unhealthy stations after periodic intervals ”. Looking at it purely from the medical point of view for the moment would it not be advisable to transfer persons from unhealthy stations?—That is left to the discretion of District Officers and there is no doubt they do take that into consideration.

K-3470. In your annual report you state that the medical officers of your Railway had previously been chiefly “ purveyors of medical certificates ”. You do not consider that that is to-day a correct description?—(*Dr. Suhrawardy*) : It is not because the system has changed. Before 1928 we had not a whole time railway medical staff ; now we have a whole time railway medical staff whose one duty it is to look after railway people. The position is now getting better.

K-3471. Have you sufficient medical officers, Assistant Surgeons and Sub-Assistant Surgeons?—I cannot say it is sufficient ; it is a question of policy.

K-3472. I think you have recently proposed additions to your staff?—Yes.

K-3473. Are those proposals likely to be accepted?—I think so, as the Agent has just said “ within the means at his disposal ”. I have been telling the Indian employees that they are always trying to increase the pay but do not try to get the railway to increase the expenditure on preventive medicines instead of curative medicines.

K-3474. In your sanitary department you have a number of Sanitary Inspectors?—Yes, 20.

K-3475. What qualifications have they?—They are not all qualified but now we have a staff selection committee and we only take on people who have definitely recognized diplomas from recognized institutions.

K-3476. So that you have the beginnings of a sanitary department?—Yes.

K-3477. Have you a malariologist?—Yes, we have one malariologist but he is leaving us.

K-3478. Seeing that your Railway is such an unhealthy railway, would it not be advisable to have a separate public health staff for preventive work including malaria?—Yes. I have discussed it with my Agent and the idea is to have a department. The Chief Medical Officer of every railway is required to pass the D. P. H. examination.

K-3479. The Chief Medical Officer has not time to do public health work.—That is his work.

K-3480. You have said in your memorandum that you cannot tour sufficiently?—Yes. I require more district officers with public health qualifications. I have now a district medical officer in Calcutta and I have been relieved of the executive and professional duties in this district and give more attention to my administrative functions.

K-3481. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is it the case as is stated in one of the Trade Union statements that trolley facilities up and down the line have been withdrawn from the Sub-Assistant Surgeons ?—I have given trolley facilities to one Sub-Assistant Surgeon who had not those facilities before. The engineering department told me that a motor trolley has to be run according to tokens so that in most cases it would have to run like a train. (*Mr. Maflin*) : We do not provide trollies for every Assistant and Sub-Assistant Surgeon because their work is done mostly in stations. If there were urgent cases, of course, the District Officer would help the Sub-Assistant Surgeon.

K-3482. So that there may be some justification for the statement made in the employees' memorandum ?—Yes, but it is a little overstated.

K-3483. *Colonel Russell* : Do you accept the general policy of developing preventive work on the lines which Dr. Suhrawardy has explained ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : Yes. As far as malaria is concerned we have already done a good deal in sanitation and drainage ; we have accepted it as a general policy and applied it as far as we possibly could.

K-3484. Have you any hospital in Calcutta ?—(*Dr. Suhrawardy*) : No, unfortunately we have none in Calcutta.

K-3485. Has it been put before the Agent that there should be a hospital in Calcutta ?—Yes, especially for the Anglo-Indian and European employees. We are supposed to get a certain number of beds in the local hospital but in practice it is very difficult to get the patients in though we offered to pay a definite contribution. (*Mr. Maflin*) : It is a matter I will certainly consider.

K-3486. Have you any maternity wards in your hospital ?—Yes, for instance at Saidpur we have got what we call the cottage ward system which is a very good system.

K-3487. Will you also extend the employment of Indian and European nurses in these hospitals ?—Yes.

K-3488. How many cases did nurses and trained midwives attend last year ?—I could not say off-hand, but I will send in a statement.

K-3489. Are these nurses available for cases confined in houses ?—The matter is under consideration of the Agent. We have arrangements in our hospitals for confinement and there is the cottage system. If they want midwives to go to their own homes we would first of all ascertain whether the services of the nurses can be spared from the hospital. If the services of the nurses can be spared no one below the rank of a district medical officer can send her to an employee's house and the employee must satisfy the district medical officer that the nurse will get certain conveniences which are absolutely necessary. We have four Indian nurses.

K-3490. It has been stated in certain memoranda sent in by employees that western medicines are not looked on with any favour by Indian employees because they do not effect cures. May it be that when a prescription is written by a doctor prescribing, say, 10 grains of quinine

for malaria, the compounder puts in one grain and pockets nine grains ?—I agree. Compounders are paid very low wages. The Assistant Surgeons and Sub-Assistant Surgeons whom we had in the past used to give the good medicine to the private patients and watery medicine to the poor people but that is not the system so much on our Railway as in Government service. Better supervision is required and surprise visits should be paid, the medicines being analysed. The reason why our Indian employees have little faith in western medicine is for patriotic reasons.

K-3491. Are any bathing and washing facilities provided in workshops ?—Yes, there are numerous taps.

K-3492. Various complaints have been made to the Commission in memoranda submitted by employees with regard to eye sight tests.—I think our methods are absolutely up-to-date and very fair ; we have to demand a high standard having regard to the safety of the travelling public.

K-3493. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What encouragement do you give to the men to pass the examination of the St. John's Ambulance Association ?—Other things being equal it is considered an additional merit when promotion is being considered. We have now about 3,000 people who have passed that examination. I have been able to start four brigade divisions.

K-3494. *Colonel Gidney* : Do you use the most up-to-date methods of testing eye-sight ?—Yes.

K-3495. Is it your experience that many young men who have passed the eye-sight test on entering the service and who have been subsequently re-examined on more than one occasion and found fit, after about 10 or 15 years' service are suddenly discovered to have bad sight ? I myself have examined a number of cases from your Railway and have discovered little marks in their eyes due to grit. These men are considered to be unfit for further service and are discharged according to the terms of their agreement. Is it right to discharge men on account of an occupational disease caused by and contracted on duty ?—If the marks in the eye are such that they impair the man's vision to such an extent that he cannot satisfy the test, I report him as unfit for doing duty as a Driver or reading signals ; in such a case it would not be safe for him to continue to drive. The question arises whether the deficiency of eye-sight discovered at the end of 20 years' service is due to coal grit or to ulcer caused by a disease say of specific origin.

*Colonel Gidney* : Mr. Chairman after that reply it is apparent that the witness not being an ophthalmic surgeon does not understand my question and rather than create a conflict in professional opinion I shall not answer him any more questions on that point on which he may be a specialist.

K-3496. There are 1,700 miles of railway and you have 4 medical officers ?—Yes.

K-3497. Which means that each medical officer looks after about 420 miles ?—Yes.

K-3498. You have about 56,000 men ?—Yes.

K-3499. I suppose these men have about 1,50,000 dependants. Do you think four district medical officers can look after 2,00,000 people ?—I do not.

K-3500. You think the staff is inadequate ?—Yes.

K-3501. Do you think your malariologist has done any good work ?—I do not know. He has done a certain amount of work, but the Railway Board has recently considered that we cannot retain him on his present pay, which is Rs. 1,400 a month.

K-3502. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You do not consider that that money has been wasted. Do you ?—No ; money that is spent on public health work is never wasted ; whether we got the full value of it is another matter.

K-3503. *Colonel Gidney* : Do you think one malariologist sufficient for the needs of your Railway ?—No. Now we have four district medical officers doing anti-malarial work. One has the D. P. H., London and another D. T. M. (London). Two of them have been through the special malarial class at Karnol.

K-3504. If they confine themselves to public health work who will do the administrative work and attend the sick at Headquarters ?—They do both.

K-3505. *Mr. Chatterjee* : Why is an invidious distinction maintained with regard to housing for Indian and Europeans ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : They were all built according to the European and Indian styles ; the cost of the building is generally related to the pay.

K-3506. The Anglo-Indian receiving less than Rs. 300 a month is given a larger plinth area than an Indian drawing the same pay.—That was so in the past, but we are rectifying that in the future.

K-3507. In lower subordinate quarters only 50 gallons of water per unit is allowed for all purposes.—That is right.

K-3508. Do you consider that adequate in a tropical climate ?—I have never had any complaints about water-supply. (*Mr. Joscelyne*) : I have had no complaints.

K-3509. We have submitted our complaints and a new order has been passed that staff appointed after July 1920 will be required to pay house rent which amounts to a reduction of their wages.—(*Mr. Maflin*) : That applies to new entrants.

K-3510. In your memorandum it is stated that midwives will be made available in case of sickness or confinement in employees' homes provided suitable accommodation for them is arranged. Do you think employees can provide proper accommodation for a midwife in the houses they occupy. We suggest that you should send a midwife or a nurse to a station in a carriage which she can occupy while she is looking after the patient in the house ?—I am afraid it would be very expensive to have to reserve special carriages for nurses travelling on the railways. I will enquire whether under practical conditions any difficulty arises.

K-3511. Are you going to appoint more *dais* and nurses ?—As Dr. Suhrawardy has said our idea is to gradually extend the system.

K-2512. It is said that the Indian staff of your Railway are averse to going into hospital. You are aware that all the hospitals of Calcutta and district are always full of Indian patients, and that other Indians are awaiting their turn to get admission. What is the reason why the Eastern Bengal Railway Indian staff have a special aversion from going into hospital ?—That has reference to women.

K-3513. Are you aware of the fact that Rs. 6,000 is given to European institutes with a membership of 820, and Rs. 6,540 is given to Indian institutes with a membership of 6,944 ?—We have not built any European institute in the last 10 or 12 years, and in the last three years we have built three Indian institutes. During the year 1928-29 the grand total, including grants-in-aid, to European institutes was Rs. 10,203, and the grand total to Indian institutes, including grants-in-aid, was Rs. 24,416.

K-3514. Is not there an inequitable distribution of the funds between the two communities ? Now, regarding educational assistance, I find that the European and Anglo-Indian staff is given Rs. 74,410. or Rs. 75.2 per head ; whereas for 56,500 Indian employees only Rs. 13,700 is being given, or Rs. 4 per head ?—That is more or less correct.

K-3515. Is it to be expected that in future the amount will be more equally distributed ?—Including night schools, we have given Rs. 20,801 to Indians, and Rs. 74,500 to Europeans and Anglo-Indians.

K-3516. Are you aware of the fact that Rs. 11 is sanctioned by the railway for the maintenance of a conservancy bullock, whereas Rs. 12 is sanctioned for the maintenance of a human being ?—I was not aware of it.

K-3517. You say that there is a bathing tank provided for Indians at some places. May I know where those places are ?—At Santahar.

K-3518. You say that in the country areas there are ample free fishing facilities provided for your Indian employees. Is it not a fact that the borrow pits are let out for fishing rights ?—I should want notice of that question.

K-3519. *Colonel Gidney* : Would you have any objection to the term "subordinate service" being abolished and replaced by the term "non-gazetted service" ?—Speaking personally, I would certainly have no objection.

K-3520. Certain allowances are given to your employees at unhealthy stations. Would you accept a sickness insurance scheme for the people who are employed at those stations ? My point is this. A man may be there for a week, and he gets a very bad attack of malarial fever of the malignant tertian type. He is incapacitated for six months on account of which he is given leave ; but during that six months he gets pay for only one month's sick leave. He loses all his pay for the rest of the time, and he loses all his extra allowances for not being at that station. Would you prefer having a sickness insurance scheme for such a man, or would you prefer the Workmen's Compensation Act to operate in such cases ?—The Workmen's Compensation Act is for a different purpose.

K-3521. It is an occupational disease ?—Why should not the man take out a small insurance himself ?

K-3522. He is carrying out your orders. Why should he incur extra expense ?—It is rather a big question. It is putting extra responsibilities on to Government.

K-3523. In the promotion of subordinates to officials do you subscribe to the Central Advisory Railway Committee's 20 per cent ?—I think we do.

K-3524. Have you carried that out ?—The Railway Board co-ordinate all the recommendations.

K-3525. Will you give figures since 1926 showing that the order of 20 per cent. promotion of subordinates to officials has been carried out ?—Yes.

K-3526. In the recruitment of Foremen and Assistant Foremen in your workshops, you have hitherto recruited, and you do even now, I understand, recruit in the Signals Department, covenanted men from England ?—We have not recruited covenanted men for some years.

K-3527. Is it the policy on your Railway that no more covenanted men will be recruited in the workshops ?—The last covenanted man was recruited in 1924.

*Colonel Gidney* : If you are not covenanting any more I have nothing further to say on this point.

K-3528. In regard to discharges and dismissals, the new Railway Board rules enact that men of ten years' service cannot be discharged unless certain formulæ are gone through. Do you think it right that a man of one year's service should be deprived of the same right ?—The point is that a man with ten years' service has established a stake on the railway.

*Colonel Gidney* : But since protection against injustice is the aim of these new rules, why deny this to an employee of one or 5 years service. All are entitled to justice and redress.

K-3529. In regard to house accommodation, there is a great dearth of houses at Sealdah and Narculdanga for Europeans and Anglo-Indians which necessitates these people hiring houses in the City of Calcutta at prohibitive rents ; they cannot get a single room under Rs. 60 or 80. Cannot you ameliorate this state of affairs by hiring houses and subletting them to your Railway servants at the usual Railway rental ?—I will certainly look into the question of accommodation.

K-3530. Do you think that the Railway Board's new educational scheme operates prejudicially to the European and Anglo-Indian community on your Railway ?—That is a difficult question to answer.

K-3531. You have studied the problem ?—I have.

K-3532. Would you rather have that scheme, or the old Eastern Bengal Educational Scheme ?—I agree with the general principle that education should not be regarded as a matter for the railways. Education is a transferred subject, and it is really a matter for local Governments or the Central Government.

K-3533. If the Railway Board were prepared to accept the old Eastern Bengal Railway Educational Scheme, would you be prepared

to accept it ?—I think on the whole the present educational scheme operates too severely against the railways. I know of one case where a man's pay was Rs. 150 and he was drawing in the way of educational assistance Rs. 175.

K-3534. That was on the old scale, and not on the new ?—The old scale is still in force.

K-3535. Not for new entrants ?—No.

K-3536. I am talking of new entrants. The new scheme operates very harshly against them, does it not ?—I certainly think it does.

K-3537. Regarding hours of work, it has been brought to my notice that the P. W. I. Department, and the Signals and Electrical Engineering Departments, are liable for work for 24 hours a day after having done an 8 hour routine day's work, and that they are given no overtime or no Sunday allowance, which is given to all other departments of the railway ?—The nature of their work is largely intermittent.

K-3538. Would you be prepared to consider for all your staff employed in Calcutta a Presidency allowance, the same as is given to all those employed in every other department of the Government of India ?—That would mean a very big question.

K-3539. I know, but it would mean an amelioration of the present hard lot of these people in Calcutta. The service agreement, which was printed in 1913 and which is still in operation, makes every servant on your Railway a temporary servant, and gives him no permanency. Do you not think that you should alter your service agreement in accordance with the changing railway administration of to-day, and in accordance with the recent orders issued by the Railway Board on discharges and dismissals ?—The recent orders about discharges and dismissals would automatically operate so as to make the service agreement more permanent.

K-3540. Do you mean to infer from the answers you gave to Mr. Cliff that the road to a railway union is through a welfare committee ?—I do not necessarily mean through a welfare committee, because the railway union will still exist. I mean that it is largely a question of education. The men must know what the implications of trade unionism are. They must develop some sense of responsibility so as to know what their demands would mean to the railway administration.

K-3541. *Major Wagstaff* : You said that you would not mind substituting the term "non-gazetted" for "subordinate". I think "subordinate" is generally used as a noun. Cannot you suggest some more appropriate term, because I do not believe you will get people to talk about an officer and a "non-gazetted". I think that is the crux of the whole question. I admit that there are objections to the term "subordinate", but I doubt whether the term "non-gazetted" would ever come into use, because you are substituting an adjective for a noun. We ought to try to think of some more appropriate term than "non-gazetted", because no body will ever talk about a "non-gazetted".—(*Mr. Maftin*) : It does not matter what label you give any particular category ; I have not considered whether it should be "subordinate" or "non-gazetted".



K-3542. It has been said that every body who is recruited after a certain date will have to pay rent. Does that apply to lower paid staff ?—(*Mr. Pringle*) : Menials are excluded.

K-3543. The policy still is, as it always has been, to house the menials free ?—Yes, but only certain categories of menials are entitled to rent-free quarters.

K-3544. The position has not been made harder under the new rules with regard to menials.—No.

K-3545. It has been made easier ?—Yes.

*Major Wagstaff* : With regard to the memorandum of the Railway Board showing the number of men discharged during the last five years on class I railways, you may realize that the figures for some railways refer only to the last four years, while for one railway it refers only to one year. The comparison which has been drawn is therefore possibly not quite fair. According to my calculations the figure for the Eastern Bengal Railway which is 3.9 per cent. does not compare unfavourably with most other railways.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : Will you please send us revised figures ?

*Major Wagstaff* : Yes.

K-3546. In your memorandum you deal with co-operative credit societies. I suppose the conditions are the same as on other railways and that only provident fund subscribers can obtain any benefit from joining that society.—(*Mr. Maflin*) : That is right.

K-3547. Have you any proposals to put forward with regard to the problem of indebtedness of lower paid subordinates who do not possess the security provided by the provident fund ?—I understand the Railway Board are contemplating extending the provident fund to certain categories of lower paid employees.

K-3548. One method of dealing with it is to extend the provident fund and so *ipso facto* extend the security, but apart from that you do not see any other means of getting round the difficulty ?—I have considered it, but I cannot see any other possible way.

K-3549. *Sir Alexander Murray* : In Bombay we found that an attempt had been made to compound debts to money-lenders before money was advanced by the co-operative credit societies.—(*Mr. Pringle*) : That is one of the things we shall consider.

K-3550. *Major Wagstaff* : Have any definite proposals on paper come from the Railway Board within the last nine months with regard to leave to be given to lower paid staff ?—Yes.

K-3551. So that that matter is being *actively* considered.—Yes.

K-3552. What is your general policy with regard to the provision of houses for your staff ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : This is a note I made about 5 or 6 months ago ; it is based on the Railway Board's general policy modified to suit our particular conditions :

*Note.*

“ One of the main grievances of our staff is concerned with the question of housing. I think we should work to a definite programme and would like the position examined in the light of the following remarks.

2. The Railway only undertakes to provide accommodation for its employees,

(i) where they must from the nature of their work live close to it, and

(ii) where private enterprise does not supply the need.

The phrase "where private enterprise does not supply the need" must not be regarded too literally. There are obviously limits to the charge we can expect our staff to pay for house rent and to the distance they should be required to walk to their work. Where such are exorbitant—the decision on this must be left to the discretion of the District Officers—I would be inclined to regard condition (ii) as having been complied with.

A census should be made showing what the position is at each of the stations on our Railway in relation to what is already supplied by this administration and the quarters which should be supplied owing either to quarters for emergency staff (i) not having been provided or (ii) private accommodation being inadequate or (iii) too distant from the site of work, or (iv) prevailing rents being exorbitant. Our building programme should then provide for meeting these needs in order of relative urgency.

3. In this connection District Officers should be asked to submit their recommendations, in co-ordination with each other, of the order in which quarters should be built having regard to their relative urgency and of how they propose to utilize quarters set free as a result of the introduction of the Divisional System."

K-3553. Have you any priority list to which you work?—We have departmental priority lists but they have to be co-ordinated in order to obtain one general priority list.

K-3554. With regard to Sealdah, for instance?—As a matter of fact I have already agreed to one lakh of rupees being set aside for next year for Sealdah.

K-3555. The divisional organization has been criticised by some of the workers' organizations. In the last few years, there has been considerable labour legislation, regulations are becoming much more intricate and are growing in volume; has not the time come when the administration of personnel matters is a matter for a specialist to deal with and not for the ordinary technical officer? You have of course made a start in having a special Personnel Branch in your own office; do you consider that in time that idea will extend into the districts, even if you do not have a divisional system?—It may do, but as far as the divisional organization is concerned, you are talking to the converted; in my own case I see all those difficulties and I see the advantages.

K-3556. But if the divisional organization does not become a reality on the Eastern Bengal Railway, the problem is to obtain some of its advantages with the district organization. One of the great advantages may possibly be the better organization of staff work by specialists as opposed to administration by technical officers who cannot possibly be acquainted with all the details of the labour legislation which has been enacted in the past and of which we shall have a great deal more.—The difficulty will be to try to engraft on to a departmental system something

which really belongs to a different form of organization ; it will require a good deal of thinking out.

K-3557. So possibly the only solution will be a divisional organization, if we are going to reap the benefits of a fully developed Personnel Branch.—Yes.

K-3558. *Mr. Chatterjee* : When a serious accident occurs on the railway, there is a joint enquiry to go into the cause of the accident and fix the responsibility. The usual practice at present is that officers go to the place and take the evidence of the men who are directly or indirectly concerned with the accident. Then a certain number of men are found guilty and are punished, but the men who are found guilty are never given the opportunity of knowing what evidence has been adduced against them and are never given a chance of cross-examining the witnesses ; they have not the help of some competent person to cross-examine the witnesses. In my opinion they are not given a fair chance ?—I do not think we have had any cases where we have been wrong.

K-3559. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You say the policy on this railway is to reduce and, if possible, eventually abolish the system of fines. What do you propose to substitute ?—It is going to be a very difficult question. We are considering introducing black marks, but black marks are not very much good where you have a Driver who consistently bursts points ; the remedy might be worse than the present form of punishment. (*Mr. Pringle*) : Fines have been considerably reduced.

K-3560. *Mr. Cliff* : The union say that you often lower the grade of men and reduce their pay.—That is only done as the result of continual warnings. (*Mr. Joscelyne*) : We have reduced them for serious offences.

K-3561. *Sir Alexander Murray* : In your opinion which is the least objectionable to the workmen ?—The fine ; reduction is a heavier penalty than a fine.

K-3562. *Mr. Cliff* : You have both systems in operation.—Yes.

K-3563. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You have a system of apprenticeship in the shops ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : Yes.

K-3564. I think the period is six years ?—Yes.

K-3565. Do you find that your apprentices stay on until the end of six years or do they leave you after the end of two or three years—(*Mr. Joscelyne*) : They all stay ; very few go ; they all feel that they have life-long employment on the railway.

K-3566. *Colonel Gidney* : Do you recruit your Traffic Inspectors, local Inspectors and Permanent way Inspectors from your subordinate staff ?—(*Mr. Maflin*) : Entirely.

K-3567. Then why do you not recruit your Signal Inspectors from your Signal assistants ?—Because we have a good deal of power automatic signalling on the Eastern Bengal Railway and we cannot find the men to do the work.

K-3568. Then you do not train them properly.—We have not got the proper facilities ; you require a good man to do automatic signalling.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## (RAILWAYS)

## Sixty-ninth Meeting

(PANEL NO. 1).

CALCUTTA.

Wednesday, 5th February 1930.

PRESENT :

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E. (*Presiding*).

Mr. G. D. BIRLA, M.L.A.

Diwan CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).

Major H. W. WAGSTAFF, M.C., R.E.

Lt.-Col. H. A. J. GIDNEY, M.L.A.

Mr. J. K. CHATTERJEE.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*Mr. A. DIBDIN, *Joint Secretary.*

Mr. SURENDRA NATH, M.A., LL.B., Acting President ; Mr. HIKMAT-ULLAH, Bar.-at-Law, Chief Legal Adviser ; Mr. H. S. BHATNAGAR, General Secretary ; and Mr. K. N. PANDEY, Assistant Station Master, representatives of the East Indian Railway Union, Moradabad.

K-3570. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How many of you are actually railway employees ?—(*Mr. Pandey*) : I am a railway employee.

K-3571. Are you a member of the committee ?—Yes. (*Mr. Bhatnagar*) : I was on the railway ; I have been Assistant Station Master and have done various other duties. We have with us to-day a Driver.

K-3572. Your Union was founded in 1926 and registered in Lucknow in 1927 ?—Yes.

K-3573. What is the membership ?—We had about 3,000 members in the beginning ; now we have about 2,000.

K-3574. What types of railway workers do you represent ?—All types.

K-3575. Your head office is at Moradabad ; have you branches up the line ?—Yes.

K-3576. Do you find that your members pay their subscriptions and keep in touch ?—Yes ; but on account of the unsympathetic views of the railway officials and victimization of the officials and active members of the Union, the workers are afraid and are not paying their subscriptions regularly. About 1,000 are paying regularly.

K-3577. Do you keep accounts ?—Yes.

K-3578. Did you lodge your accounts this year with the Registrar ?—Yes.

K-3579. Have you a constitution ?—Yes.

K-3580. Will you send us a copy of your constitution and your latest accounts ?—Yes.

K-3581. Have you been officially recognized ?—We have not been properly recognized by the railway officials.

K-3582. But I understand that the Railway Agent had communicated to you that he would be prepared to discuss with you matters relating to the general staff but would not take up individual grievances ?—Yes, he has given his assurance but he is not acting in accordance with it. (*Mr. Pandey*) : Assurances were given by Mr. A. L. Parsons, the Government spokesman, but those assurances have never been carried out by the Railway and racial discrimination still exists.

K-3583. You do not like the Welfare Committee that has been set up ?—(*Mr. Bhatnagar*) : No, and as far as I can find out the whole staff is opposed to it.

K-3584. How many workers' delegates are there on the Committee at Moradabad ?—I do not think there are any actual workers' representatives ; there are only those put forward by the Traffic Inspector and Assistant Station Master.

K-3585. Are there no actual workers at all on that Committee ? Is not this engine Driver who is with you on the Committee ?—Yes.

K-3586. I suppose he is an actual worker ?—Yes.

K-3587. I want to know if there are any actual workers on your welfare committees ?—Yes, there are.

K-3588. How were they elected ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : There are 15 workers, 5 being nominated and 10 elected by the staff.

K-3589. How is the election carried out ?—(*Mr. Pandey*) : They have to be nominated by the staff and then there is voting by majority.

K-3590. Are voting papers issued to the staff ?—No, but any one can send in a paper on which is written the name to the Station Master at the polling station.

K-3591. Do you hold meetings at the polling stations and explain that there is an opportunity for a worker to be appointed to a welfare committee ?—No, there is no such procedure, but a register is sent along the line and names are put in it. Generally the officials can easily exercise their influence over the staff and get them to elect a particular individual.

K-3592. You say you do not get copies of any Government publications ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : I wrote to the Agent asking him to send me copies of all these things offering to pay the price, but he was not prepared even to accept that ; he did not even care to send copies of the Railway Gazette to us. Our Union is entirely constitutional. Sometimes workers come to me and complain against their officers ; if I know the rules and find that their grievances are not legitimate I can explain to them that the officer against whom the complaint is made has acted correctly and

there can be no ground of complaint. In order to reduce the number of complaints I wanted copies of the rules, circulars, and so on ; but the Agent said that as far as the time-table was concerned I could purchase a copy of that, but the other publications were not available.

K-3593. You say that there are services in which a man has to wait to rise to a higher post till the occupant of that post vacates it. Is it not the custom everywhere ?—(*Mr. Pandey*) : Whenever a vacancy occurs in some higher grade it is given to an Anglo-Indian without academic qualifications.

K-3594. You suggest that there should be a competitive examination for filling vacancies in higher and lower grades, and that where competitive examinations have been held the men with the highest marks have not secured the promotion. Do you not think the railway officers are entitled to take into consideration other things besides the result of a purely competitive examination ?—Certainly, but we find that men with departmental experience are given no consideration. I personally was given no consideration while men who only obtained 44 per cent. of the marks in the examination were given positions.

K-3595. Are you really in earnest in suggesting that your Sanitary Inspectors must have a D. P. H. qualification ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : Perhaps the gentleman who wrote that did not mean that the actual degree should be insisted upon, but that he should be a qualified man.

K-3596. As a practical man you do not suggest that your Sanitary Inspectors should have the D. P. H. qualification ?—No.

K-3597. You say that men charged with irregularity or omission are not given the least opportunity of explaining their conduct. When the question of discharging men who have had so many years service arises, are not they given a charge-sheet ?—No, never. Men are discharged according to the terms of paragraph 2 of the agreement of service. That applies to men who have had 22 years' service. No reason is assigned for their being discharged.

K-3598. But are there not Government rules under which a man who has 10 years' service must receive a charge-sheet before his case can be disposed of ?—(*Mr. Pandey*) : That rule is in existence, but the railway officials shelter themselves behind the power which is given them by paragraph 2 ; they give a month's notice.

K-3599. But this new rule will obviate that trouble in the future ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : Yes, but as copies of the Gazette are not available we do not know much about the rules.

K-3600. You say that men should not be discharged except in very serious cases, and then by a board. On a railway employing 164,000 workers do you suggest that in every case of discharge or dismissal a special board must sit ?—I think it should be done in the case of people of long service.

K-3601. You complain about the divisional system. Why do you think the divisional system operates against the workers more adversely than the departmental system ?—With regard to the divisional system we complain about the medical arrangements. We have one doctor at headquarters and when people are sick on the line the doctor finds it very

difficult to get to them. Then we have certainly more confidence in the Civil Surgeons because they have greater experience, but owing to the introduction of this scheme Civil Surgeons are now not available to us.

K-3602. Your complaint against the divisional system has reference only to the medical department ?—Yes. Formerly the lady doctors were subordinate to the Civil Surgeon. So that a female relative of an employee could consult the lady doctor, but now we cannot do that.

K-3603. You say that in the Moradabad Welfare Committee since August 1928 not a single grievance has been put right. Is that so ?—Yes.

K-3604. *Mr. Cliff* : Do members of your Union who are members of the Committee get a copy of the minutes of the Welfare Committee ?—Yes.

K-3605. Surely some representations have been acceded to ?—(*The Driver*) : I am a member of the Committee ; there have been individual cases where grievances have been remedied through the Committee.

K-3606. Then what is the complaint if the Committee is working satisfactorily ?—(*Mr. Pandey*) : Delegates will not put forward matters which the officials do not wish put forward because the officials are there and the delegates stand in awe of the officials. I myself put forward two questions for a delegate to put to the Committee, but they were not put forward ; the delegate refused to put them forward because he feared the officials.

K-3607. If your men are afraid to stand on their own feet, how is any machinery going to work ?—But there should be a desire to work the machinery and not merely to put up a show. I tell you candidly that if I had been a delegate I should have done the same as that delegate did. There should be an equal number of officials and employees on the Committee and there should be no canvassing on the part of the officials.

K-3608. *Sir Alexander Murray* : But do they not leave it to you to make the election ?—But we cannot face the possibility of unemployment ; our very existence is threatened. For instance, I am receiving Rs. 55 a month and they could get a graduate to take my place on Rs. 30. That is my position after having served for ten years.

K-3609. You say that in many cases wages have not been paid for months together ?—If a man is ill and therefore he is not present to draw his pay when the pay clerk comes round, the pay is not sent to him and he may have to wait for a month or two for his pay.

K-3610. Is that a general complaint on the Railway ?—Yes.

K-3611. You say the menial staff are not entitled to any leave at all ?—Yes ; they get 15 days leave during the whole year.

K-3612. *Mr. Cliff* : It is said by the railway administration that your activities have so far been conducted in an irresponsible manner ?—That is merely prejudice against the Union, because we exposed cases of the high-handedness, favouritism and corruption of the officials ; they say that simply because we prevent them acting according to their own sweet will

K-3613. Has the Agent ever addressed a communication to your Union calling attention to the fact that you are conducting your business in an irresponsible manner ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : No.

K-3614. Has your attention also been called by the Railway to the suggestion that your communications are couched in unbecoming terms ?—Not so far as I know.

K-3615. The Railway Board have informed the Commission that the question of a proper, suitable and efficient machinery for the prevention and settlement of disputes on railways has engaged the consideration of the Government of India and the Railway Board in recent years. Has the Agent of your particular Railway ever consulted your Union with regard to the establishment of machinery for the settlement of differences or strikes ?—No, never.

K-3616. In what form do you suggest that victimization takes place ?—Men who take an active part in the Union are transferred or discharged under paragraph 2 of the service agreement ; their services are dispensed with without assigning any reasons or they receive heavy punishment for very petty offences.

K-3617. May I take it that your Union will not oppose transfers on the railway system ?—But as far as possible we want to have members of our executive committee at our headquarters. If they transfer all the members of the executive committee that committee is practically useless and the whole burden devolves on us. A man who has not been transferred for 22 years is now transferred because he is taking part in the Union. If all the members of the executive committee are transferred the work of the Union must suffer.

K-3618. Supposing the Agent says it is his duty to transfer good men ?—He should not transfer with a view to injuring the Union.

K-3619. You cannot object to his transferring men and promoting them ?—But they are not promoted when they are transferred.

K-3620. Can you put before us cases where men have been degraded ?—(*Mr. Bhatnagar*) : Yes. Mr. Bashir-ud-Deen was a Driver working on passenger and mail trains ; he has been transferred to less important work and his mileage has been reduced. (*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : He cannot now act as a mail Driver. Mail Drivers get more allowances. He has been transferred to a small station where he cannot draw mail allowances and can only work on passenger trains.

K-3621. What reason is given by the Company for the transfer ?—Generally the reason given is that it is in the interests of the service.

K-3622. But was no other reason given with regard to this particular case ?—No, no specific reason was given. If we write to them they say they cannot deal with an individual case ; if we write about several people or about the general practice prevailing they say they are doing it in the interests of the service.

K-3623. You suggest that the administration are really opposing the work and activities of the Union ?—Yes.

K-3624. How does that come about ?—Active members who are taking an interest in the Union and collecting subscriptions for the Union are transferred or punished in other ways or they are dealt with under paragraph 2 of the service agreement. That being so, the Union cannot do much and employees will be afraid of joining the Union. That is why our membership has fallen off. People like to help us privately.



K-3625. Your view is that the opposition takes the form of penalizing men who are members of your Union ?—Yes. We do not object to disciplinary action so long as it is not done with a view to injuring the Union.

K-3626. You appreciate that it is a serious charge that you are making ?—It is. We have collected a large number of instances of victimization in our memorandum.

K-3627. Is your Union prepared to enter into an orderly method of negotiation with the Railway Company ?—Yes.

K-3628. It is suggested that you have no control over your members ?—We have. If we instruct a member to do a thing he will do it. They have a great regard for us. Even those who have not joined the Union have a great regard for us. They regard us as their well-wishers and they are prepared to follow us.

K-3629. You have complained of housing difficulty ?—We complain of a shortage of quarters ; people have to live in a city because they cannot find quarters on the railway premises.

K-3630. What amount do they have to pay ?—It depends upon the city in which they live ; probably they have to spend Rs. 2 or Rs. 3, and sometimes Rs. 5. For instance in Lucknow if they cannot get accommodation in the town they have to go to the suburbs where they have to pay at least Rs. 2.

K-3631. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you actual knowledge of this ?—Yes ; there are some people living near my own house.

K-3632. *Mr. Cliff* : Do the menial staff, such as watermen, porters, and peons do what is known as " intermittent " work ?—Yes. The watermen have to supply water when trains come in. At a station like Moradabad about 40 trains pass in 24 hours ; these men have to attend every train ; they cannot go home ; they have to be present.

K-3633. *Mr. Birla* : Are there different watermen for night duty ?—No. They are the same watermen and they attend day and night.

K-3634. What is the main function of the Welfare Committee ?—To look after the welfare of the staff.

K-3635. Do they concern themselves with questions of education, sanitation and so on ?—If they do it is only superficial, because grievances have remained unredressed.

K-3636. Are they doing any social welfare work ?—No. No social welfare work is done by the Welfare Committees. (*Mr. Pandey*) : They are supposed to do it but they do not. (*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : We should expect to have some lectures on hygiene and similar subjects but nothing is done.

K-3637. Have these welfare committees undertaken such work as preaching, cinemas, education and recreation ?—(*Mr. Pandey*) : No, nothing of the sort.

K-3638. Have they any funds at their disposal ?—No. The Divisional Superintendent may know, but so far no funds have been expended.

K-3639. So far as the members are concerned they do not know whether there are any funds at the disposal of the Welfare Committee ?—There are no funds.

K-3640. Are there any paid officials of the Welfare Committee ?—No, it is all honorary work.

K-3641. Then if what you say is correct, these Welfare Committees have not been doing anything useful except holding meetings and representing grievances to the management, which you say are never redressed ?—Yes.

K-3642. It happens from what you say that the relations between the Union and the Railway Company are not at all cordial ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : They are not.

K-3643. Is there any special reason for that ?—No.

K-3644. Have you had any labour trouble or anything of that kind since your Union has been established ?—No. I am looking after several social service bodies in Moradabad and they can have nothing against me. There has never been a strike since our Union was formed.

K-3645. So that there has been no special reason why the Railway Company should take up this hostile attitude towards the Union ?—No.

K-3646. Have they recognized your Union ?—They are aware that a Union of this character exists but they have not given the Union any privileges.

K-3647. Is your Union doing any social work among your members ?—We are not at present, but we are thinking of doing so ; we are thinking of introducing magic lantern lectures and so on.

K-3648. What funds have you at the disposal of your Union ?—Last year we had about Rs. 2,000 contributed.

K-3649. In your memorandum you refer to indebtedness ; is that confined to the low paid menials ?—No, it even extends to the European staff.

K-3650. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is every body in debt ?—Yes. We are not getting sufficient wages.

K-3651. *Mr. Birla* : If every body is in debt, the logical conclusion would seem to be that even if wages were to be increased indebtedness would continue because apparently the workers spend more than they earn ?—No, that is not the point ; if the workers are given wages sufficient for their needs it would not be necessary for them to borrow any money. (*Mr. Pandey*) : The point is that we do not receive living wages ; for instance, I get Rs. 55 after 10 years' service.

K-3652. I suppose you will agree that Rs. 55 would be sufficient for an unskilled worker ?—Yes, it would be enough for a menial.

K-3653. But it is not enough for an educated man because his standard of life is higher ?—Certainly.

K-3654. Do you mean that a non-Indian of the same qualifications as you possess receives more money than you are getting ?—That is so.

K-3655. *Colonel Russell* : In your memorandum in regard to the nature of the accommodation supplied you say that the superior staff have only two small rooms : a courtyard, a kitchen, which is insufficient for a family man with a wife and two children. Do you still adhere to that statement ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : Yes, we do. Among Indians there is the *parda* system and they want privacy ; they require a room where they can receive their friends and where their children can receive education from their teachers.

K-3656. Do the teachers come to the houses ?—Station Masters or Assistant Station Masters may wish to keep a private servant, but there is no accommodation for him. In India many people are not meat-eaters and have to depend for nutritious food on cows or buffalos, but they have no room for them.

K-3657. You refer to accommodation for aged parents and other dependants. I suppose you do not suggest that the Railway should provide accommodation for all your relatives ?—But among the Indians there is the joint family system and every Indian has one or two dependants; one has to maintain one's dependants.

K-3658. You say in your memorandum that you are not allowed to build shelters in front of the quarters to protect the cattle and in another place you say that ventilation is essential. If you put up shelters in front of your quarters would you not still further restrict ventilation ?—(Mr. Pandey) : No, that would not interfere with the ventilation.

K-3659. You say that at certain places there is absolutely no arrangement for the supply of water ?—(Mr. Surendra Nath) : Yes, there is no arrangement for supply of water near by ; in some cases people have to go very far for their water.

K-3660. How far ?—About a furlong.

K-3661. You say there is no provision for latrines and men have to go into the open which is both indecent and unhygienic. Is it not the custom for most Indians to go to the open ?—Yes.

K-3662. If there were latrines would you use them ?—Yes.

K-3663. Do you think the menials would ?—Yes.

K-3664. You say that the general health conditions of railway employees are generally not satisfactory ; what reasons have you for saying that ?—They do not get enough nutritious food and they have to do night duty which tells very badly on their health.

K-3665. You complain that men are discharged from the sick list when they have not yet thoroughly recovered from their illness. How would you suggest that that difficulty should be overcome ?—The Medical Officers at present are subordinates of the executive authority and they want to oblige them as much as they can.

K-3666. In cases where there were difficulties of that kind, would you agree to have the opinion of an independent medical referee ?—Yes, we do agree. We have certain sick memoranda which will show that officers want the doctor to give a certificate of a particular kind (handling certificates to the Commission). Here is the case of a running shed Foreman wanting a doctor to give a particular form of certificate.

K-3667. You say that the arrangements which exist in railway hospitals are not at all satisfactory, and you say that the stock of medicines is inadequate ?—(Mr. Pandey) : That is really the case. On the 24th December my little child got pneumonia and died. I could not get medical help.

K-3668. But do you still maintain that the stock of medicines is inadequate ?—Certainly ; these hospitals are not maintained so efficiently as the civil hospitals are.

K-3669. How do you know that there are not proper medicines ?—*(Mr. Surendra Nath)* : Medicines which are urgently required for a particular kind of case cannot be obtained ; some medicines are kept but there is not a sufficient stock of medicines.

K-3670. Who is to judge whether the proper medicines are supplied ?—The Union judges it by the cure.

K-3671. You say that the medicines supplied are not effective. I suppose that means that they do not effect cure. Might that not be due to the fact that the compounders who make up prescriptions do not make them up according to the doctor's prescription ?—That is possible. We always think the medical officers are not as highly qualified as the Civil Surgeons are.

K-3672. So that another complaint is that the medical officers are not properly qualified ?—They may have got their degrees all right but you do not trust yourself to every doctor. The Civil Surgeon is generally regarded as the best doctor in the district and if the Railway does not accept the Civil Surgeon's certificate we think the railway authorities are not reasonable.

K-3673. You say the medical officers in most of the hospitals do not give the required attention and some of them treat the patients in an unsympathetic way. Can you give instances of that ?—Yes, they would even kick a person out. There was a doctor who was very unkind to a patient and the patient complained about it. They are generally unsympathetic because they want fees. It is their duty to treat people free but they want fees.

K-3674. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Are you making a general statement ?—That is the general state of things which is prevailing all over the Railway.

K-3675. *Colonel Russell* : Do you say that of all the medical officers ?—There may be some exceptions, but tipping is very common. If a person wants to get leave he has only got to tip the doctor and the doctor will say he is sick and he will get leave.

K-3676. What is the amount of tip that is given ?—Rs. 2 or Rs. 4.

K-3677. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Are you really saying these things with a sense of responsibility ?—Yes.

K-3678. Are you deliberately making the statement that every medical officer on the East Indian Railway has to be paid Rs. 2 or Rs. 4 ?—I do not say every medical officer. *(Mr. Pandey)* : Ten days' leave can be got for Rs. 2 without being sick. *(Mr. Hikmat Ullah)* : It does not apply to Divisional Medical Officers. We are talking of the sub-assistant grade and below that. It is difficult to prove it but it does exist.

K-3679. *Colonel Russell* : Assuming that that practice does exist how are you going to get rid of it ?—*(Mr. Surendra Nath)* : Supervision should be exercised over doctors and greater attention should be paid to our complaints.

K-3680. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You have no proof of this statement ?—If an enquiry is instituted we shall certainly give proofs.

K-3681. *Colonel Russell* : Have you as a trade union recommended your members not to give money ?—Yes. (*Mr. Hikmat Ullah*) : We told them not to give any tips to the subordinate medical officers, but they said “ Your Union has no strength, so what is the good of listening to it. Even if we are ill we must pay and if we cannot get it done without tipping we must tip.” Whenever a man came and told us of his troubles we said “ Try not to pay ”.

K-3682. Do you mean that people have come to you and complained that money was demanded for certificates ?—They have. (*Mr. Bhatnagar*) : At the general meeting I said that we ought not to pay a single pie to any medical officer or any officer.

K-3683. *Mr. Chatterjee* : The East Indian Railway Union, Khagaul, suggest that there is favouritism in recruitment and sometimes tips are paid in order to get a job. Do you know of any such cases ?—Yes (handing in a written statement).

K-3684. When with a view to retrenchment a number of men are discharged, if after a time their services are again required, are the men who have been discharged taken back or are new workers taken on ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : They may appoint new ones. So far as we are aware they do not take back the old workers.

K-3685. What is the reason for that ?—(*Mr. Bhatnagar*) : I cannot say.

K-3686. The Khagaul Union say that except in the engineering department where technical qualifications are indispensable, not a single Indian has been appointed an inspector on the East Indian Railway ; they say that Indians are given very little chance, preference being given to Anglo-Indians and Europeans ?—That is so.

K-3687. When a patient goes to a hospital and the hospital has not got the medicine which is necessary for the patient, is the patient told to buy the medicine outside ?—Yes.

K-3688. Are a sufficient number of nurses kept in the hospitals to attend to Indian patients ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : At Moradabad there are no nurses.

K-3689. What happens to the fines fund ?—It is spent on the railway institute for the benefit of Anglo-Indians and European employees.

K-3690. You mean that more money is being spent on their institutes than on yours ?—Yes.

K-3691. What is your suggestion in that regard ?—Our suggestion is that the money should be spent on our education and our institute.

K-3692. Do you think the fines which are realised from the Indian staff should be kept in a separate account ?—Yes.

K-3693. And the two funds should be utilized for the benefit of the people from whom they have been realised ?—Yes, we think so, as long as the education and institutions of the Anglo-Indians and Europeans are kept separately from our institutions.

K-3694. Who contributes to the fines fund most ?—The Indians.

K-3695. *Major Wagstaff* : What do you mean when you say that the work of the watermen is intermittent ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : I mean that they are not working all the time that they are on duty.

K-3696. Are the watermen employed at large stations on duty intermittently ?—No.

K-3697. Then you mean that the work of some watermen is intermittent while of others is not ?—Yes.

K-3698. At the present time do the watermen at large sheds and large stations work continuously for 12 hours ?—No.

K-3699. You say that active members of your Union are victimized by being transferred. Have you ever tried to compare the number of times men who are members of your Union are transferred with the number of times that men who are not members of your Union are transferred ?—Yes, trade unionists are more frequently transferred.

K-3700. Are members of the Union punished more often than non-unionists ?—Yes.

K-3701. Is it not a case of *post hoc ergo propter hoc* ; a man becomes a unionist and is then transferred and you assume that he has been transferred *because* he is a unionist ?—(*Mr. Hikmat Ullah*) : What other way can there be of proving that a man has been transferred because he has joined the Union ? Of course the Railway will say he has not been transferred because he joined the Union.

K-3702. Can you supply figures to prove that unionists are transferred more often than non-unionists ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : We have no such figures.

K-3703. With regard to the question of the minimum wage you take as an example a normal Indian family, a man, his wife, two children, a mother, a sister, a brother, and one or two widowed dependants, making altogether 8 or 9 persons. Is that really the family unit in the area from which you come ?—Yes.

K-3704. In Bombay the family unit after a certain investigation was found to be 4.2 persons exclusive of .6 dependants. Why should families be so much larger at Moradabad ?—In Bombay they are more advanced than we are, and as the people advance so the family unit becomes smaller.

K-3705. But I notice that when you deal with the family budget you give a family as consisting of 5 persons ?—We take that smaller unit in order to show that even then the pay is not sufficient.

K-3706. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Do the women and children of railway workers work ?—Among the educated people they do not work.

K-3707. So that apparently conditions which apply in Bombay do not apply to workers on the railway ?—Yes.

K-3708. *Major Wagstaff* : In Moradabad are the other members of the family so lazy that they will not work.

*Mr. Cliff* : Are you now putting forward on behalf of the Railway Board the proposition that the joint earnings of a family must be taken into consideration ?

*Major Wagstaff* : I am not putting forward anything on behalf of any organization ; I am trying to get at the facts.

K-3709. *Colonel Russell* : In these family budgets which you give in your memorandum there is an item of Rs. 2 a month for medical aid. Is that money which is paid in tips ?—Members of the family are not treated by the medical officer and have to go for treatment elsewhere.

K-3710. Do you mean that that comes to an average of Rs. 24 a year in the case of a man who is earning Rs. 20 a month ?—Yes. Sometimes the employee himself has to go to a private doctor because the medical aid given by the Railway is not sufficient.

K-3711. *Major Wagstaff* : In your budgets you include items of Rs. 4 for house rent, Rs. 2 for medical aid and Rs. 2 for clothing. I appreciate that those are intended to be averages, but in the case of a menial he may be receiving free accommodation, a certain amount of medical aid and clothing ?—Yes.

K-3712. That would reduce the budget ?—Yes.

K-3713. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Do you include bed clothing ?—No.

K-3714. Do you include money spent on household utensils ?—No. This is intended to represent the cost of bare living.

K-3715. Is your Union in favour of the 60 hours week ?—We want a shorter week than 60 hours.

K-3716. What do you want ?—Eight hours a day excluding Sunday.

K-3717. Have you looked into the Washington and Geneva Conventions in regard to this matter ?—No.

K-3718. Were you consulted in regard to any changes which Government are contemplating in regard to the weekly rest day ?—No.

K-3719. Was your union consulted in regard to any changes that the Railway Board are contemplating with regard to leave rules or in regard to blocks in promotion ?—No.

K-3720. Is it the general policy of the management of the East Indian Railway not to consult the Union ?—Yes. (*Mr. Bhatnagar*) : They do not want to see our faces.

K-3721. To what do you ascribe that ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : The officials do not want to lose their power.

K-3722. What in the opinion of your Union is the real basis of this policy of non-co-operation adopted by the management of the East Indian Railway ?—It is our painful duty to point out the faults of officers and they do not like it. They want to crush the Union as far as possible so that the workers may keep aloof from us and then the officers will have their own sweet will and do things just as they like. They regard us as outsiders and they do not like outsiders.

K-3723. What recommendation has your Union to make in regard to sickness insurance ?—I think that would be a good thing for the workers because sometimes when workers fall ill they have no funds and so they run into debt.

K-3724. Have you any recommendations with regard to that or have you studied the schemes of sickness insurance ?—No. We cannot think of higher things when our lower requirements are not conceded. We will study these things later on.

K-3725. But are you generally in agreement that some scheme should be formulated for sickness insurance ?—Yes.

K-3726. *Mr. Birla* : If any scheme of sickness insurance was introduced do you think your members would be prepared to contribute ?—(*Mr. Hikmat Ullah*) : Yes.

K-3727. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : You are in favour of a contributory scheme ?—Yes, but of course it will be necessary to raise our wages.

K-3728. *Mr. Birla* : Do you mean that with present wages you would find it impossible to contribute ?—With the present rate of wages it would be very difficult.

K-3729. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : If a man falls ill and gets into debt he may borrow as much as Rs. 40 and have to pay Rs. 3-8-0 a month interest. Do you not think it would be preferable to pay As. 4 or As. 8 a month contribution to the sickness scheme than Rs. 3-8-0 as interest ?—We should prefer to pay the contribution.

K-3730. From time to time you have made representations to the management with regard to corruption ?—Yes.

K-3731. Can you let us have the representations you have handed in to the management in regard to corruption ?—We can supply that later on. (*Mr. Bhatnagar*) : We have made representations 4 or 5 times. We have done it by wires.

K-3732. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Why not send a letter ?—It is thought that a wire is more effective than a letter.

K-3733. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Can you tell us the number of people employed by the East Indian Railway who are paid less than Rs. 20 a month ?—We cannot tell you the exact number.

K-3734. Is it your definite opinion that a man cannot live on less than Rs. 20 a month ?—Yes.

K-3735. Have you any suggestions to make in regard to representation of railway unions on a body to be set up by the Railway Board to deal with the service conditions of the employees ?—(*Mr. Surendra Nath*) : Yes, there must be some members of the Union on that body.

K-3736. Would you work that system down from the Railway Board to the divisions and the districts ?—Yes.

K-3737. *Colonel Gidney* : Are there any compounders in your Union ?—No.

K-3738. Are you representing the views of the Anglo-Indians ?—Yes.

K-3739. Have the Anglo-Indian members of your Union told you that they are willing that their wages should be reduced to your level ?—No.

K-3740. Then I take it that your Union asks that wages should be levelled up to the Anglo-Indian and European and not levelled down ?—  
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Yes ; we do not want to reduce the conditions of the Anglo-Indians ; we want to improve our position.

K-3741. *Mr. Birla* : You do not want any racial discrimination ?—No.

K-3742. *Colonel Gidney* : You have frequently represented your grievances to the Agent and to the Railway Board ?—Yes.

K-3743. And you spent a lot of money on wires ?—Yes.

K-3744. In fact all your money has been spent on wires ?—A good portion of it.

K-3745. But you have had no redress ?—No.

K-3746. Did the Railway Board send a member of that Board to Moradabad to investigate your grievances ?—Yes, but nothing has come of it.

K-3747. I think Mr. Hayman came ?—Yes.

K-3748. Did he enquire into your grievances personally ?—Yes.

K-3749. I suppose he made his report ?—Yes.

K-3750. Have you found matters improved since then ?—Not at all. We have asked the authorities for a copy of his report but we have not had it.

K-3751. Are you prepared to admit with a more sympathetic Divisional Superintendent that the conditions in the Moradabad Division are much better to-day than they were a few months ago ?—No.

K-3752. You advocate competitive examinations, but I suppose you agree that a well experienced practical Driver with a strong arm and common sense is better than a B. A. or B. Sc. Driver ?—Yes ; we ask that education should be taken into consideration as well as experience.

K-3753. In what way do you say the power under paragraph 2 of the service agreement is abused ?—The officials want to crush the Union and they use paragraph 2 for that purpose ; if an official has a personal grudge against any body he will use paragraph 2.

K-3754. I suppose you know that under the new rules which were published in the E. I. Railway Weekly Gazette of 15th January before a man who has 10 years' service is discharged under paragraph 2 he is entitled to receive a written statement of any charge which is made against him and has an opportunity of putting in a defence ?—Yes.

K-3755. Do you think a man who has only one year's service is entitled to the same protection ?—I think he is.

K-3756. Is it a fact that before the Moradabad section was taken over by the East Indian Railway you were given an assurance that you would not be deprived of your existing privileges ?—Yes.

K-3757. But in regard to medical facilities you feel that you have been deprived of your privileges by the divisional system ?—Yes ; owing to the

East Indian Railway taking over the O. and R. Railway we have been deprived of many privileges of which the medical facilities are one. We have suffered through the East Indian Railway taking over the O. and R. Railway.

K-3758. You have said that once a man is a subordinate he is always a subordinate ? Would you like to have the term " non-gazetted servant " substituted for the term " subordinate " ?—Yes.

K-3759. Is your division understaffed ?—I think it is.

K-3760. Does that mean you get no leave when you ask for it ?—Yes, we get no reliefs.

K-3761. If your division were properly staffed, do you think you would get your usual privilege leave and sick leave ?—Yes.

K-3762. Do you find that the local railway administration, put pressure upon your Medical Officer in regard to sick leave ?—Yes.

K-3763. Do you think they could put as much pressure on a Civil Surgeon ?—No.

K-3764. You say that Rs. 50 per month is given for the education of the child of a European employee ?—Yes ; they sometimes get Rs. 48, when an Anglo-Indian child goes to a school at Mussoorie.

K-3765. Can you supply a single such case to the Commission ?—I make that statement subject to correction.

*Colonel Gidney* : But you have made a specific statement to this effect in your memorandum.

K-3766. It has been stated that 15 days' leave is given to menials. Do they get that leave ?—No.

K-3767. Has an order been issued by the Agent that the 15 days' leave can be allowed but it includes all holidays ?—It does not include holidays.

K-3768. Are you aware of a circular issued by the Agent in 1927 stating the period of 15 days' leave with pay should be held to include the number of holidays with pay allowed to the staff ?—I do not know of that circular, but we know that the 15 days leave is not granted.

K-3769. The rates of wages were revised in 1928 ?—Yes.

K-3770. Is it your opinion that those wages are too low ?—Yes ; our previous wages were much better.

K-3771. You say that lowered wages tempt men to practice corruption ?—Yes ; for instance goods clerks do not get any free house.

K-3772. Do you think the cost of living in Calcutta is higher than in Moradabad ?—Yes, much higher.

K-3773. Therefore the cost of living which you have given in your memorandum is the mofussil minimum ?—Yes.

K-3774. Have you any complaint as to the difference between the rates of wages which were paid on the O. and R. Railway and those which are

paid on the East Indian Railway ?—Yes, we should prefer the O. and R. Railway rates. When the East Indian Railway rates are lower they apply those rates to us, but where the O. and R. Railway rates are lower they apply the O. and R. Railway rates.

K-3775. You say that 2 per cent. of the fines fund is spent on Indian education ?—Yes ; we have not the exact figure ; that is an impression.

K-3776. Do you think that the terms of the service agreement require considerable alteration ?—Yes. For instance, paragraph 2 ought to be abolished altogether. When a man is charged with an offence he ought to have a statement of the charge and an opportunity should be given to him to meet the charges.

K-3777. Although this is the usual practice with dismissals not discharges, you suggest that that ought to be included in your service agreement ?—Yes.

K-3778. Do you look upon gratuities as a gift ?—No.

K-3779. You look upon them as a claim and a right ?—Yes ; because we do not get any pensions.

K-3780. What is your provident fund contribution now ?—One-twelfth.

K-3781. Are you satisfied with that or do you want to increase it ?—We think the Railway ought to contribute more.

K-3782. Do you find any difficulty with regard to appeals ?—We understand the procedure adopted is this : when we send an appeal to the Agent he sends it back to the Divisional Superintendent for disposal.

K-3783. In other words the Divisional Superintendent is the judge and the accuser, and you object to that ?—Yes.

K-3784. Are you aware that Divisional Superintendents can dismiss you ?—Yes, they can.

K-3785. Do you agree with that ?—No. We think the Divisional Superintendent should have power to dismiss a man who is receiving not more than Rs. 50 a month ; the head of the department or Chief Engineer should have power to dismiss a man receiving not more than Rs. 100 ; the Agent alone should have power to dismiss a man on a salary of more than Rs. 100.

K-3786. Do you know of any other railway in which the Divisional Superintendent possesses the powers that he does on the East Indian Railway ?—No.

K-3787. So I presume you think the Divisional Superintendent has too much power on the East Indian Railway and that he abuses this at times ?—Yes. Here is an example of the treatment that is meted out (handing in a document).

(The witnesses withdrew.)

Mr. G. L. COLVIN, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Agent ; Mr. F. E. ROBERTSON, Chief Operating Superintendent ; Mr. R. L. RAY, Chief Mechanical Engineer ; Mr. A. V. VENABLES, Chief Engineer ; Dr. A. K. H. POLLOCK, Chief Medical Officer ; Mr. E. CAMERON KER, Deputy Chief Accounts Officer ; Mr. A. O. EVANS, Deputy Agent ; Mr. M. ROBERTSON, Secretary to Agent ; Mr. H. LANCASTER, Manager, Giridih Mines ; Mr. F. C. BADHWAR, Employment Officer, Lilloah ; Mr. C. S. WHITWORTE, Chief Mining Engineer, Railway Board ; representing the East Indian Railway.

K-3788. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How many employees are there on the East Indian Railway ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : Approximately 1,55,000.

K-3789. How many of these employees are drawing less than Rs. 20 a month and how many are drawing between Rs. 20 and Rs. 30 a month ?—I will send in a statement.

K-3790. You have the divisional organization on your Railway ?—Yes.

K-3791. What are the advantages and disadvantages from the workers' point of view of the divisional and the departmental systems ?—Under the divisional system personnel work is concentrated into the hands of one officer, while under the departmental system each officer looks after his own personnel. I should have thought from the workers point of view it would be an advantage to have one officer to deal with all the personnel. From the administrative point of view the divisional system is undoubtedly better for a really big system.

K-3792. Do your officers agree with you in that ?—I think so ; if any of them do not agree they had better say so.

K-3793. As far as the shops are concerned, does it make any difference whether it is the divisional system or the departmental system ?—The big workshops are outside the divisional system.

K-3794. I see you have 32,000 workers in your shops ; what percentage would you call skilled and unskilled ?—(*Mr. Ray*) : I will supply the figures.

K-3795. You suggest that a better class of railway labour could be obtained if recruitment of labour were specially dealt with by one department, the labour department, whose function it would be to select them. Do you think that could be done in the shops ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : This statement only refers to the Stores Department. I was on furlough when this statement was prepared and in many cases it is not clear whether the statement is the personal statement of a particular officer or is the opinion of the management. This particular statement was the personal opinion of one officer with which other heads of departments do not agree.

K-3796. What will be the duties of the Employment Officer who recently has been appointed ?—The Employment Officer is in charge of all the personnel work of the staff employed at these workshops, skilled and unskilled—all grades. He represents the staff in dealing with the technical officers.

K-3797. Are his duties like those of the officer in charge of the Employment Bureau of the North Western Railway?—They are similar, but I think on the North Western Railway it is more sub-divided.

K-3798. Is any man recruited without the Employment Officer first interviewing him?—No. All promotions also pass through his hands. He does the whole of what I should call the personnel work. At Lucknow we are going to appoint an Employment Officer.

K-3799. In the Lillooah workshop there are now only 10,000 workers, and yet I see that in three years 4,285 workmen have been discharged on grounds other than those of superannuation and physical unfitness and only 241 have been discharged on account of reduction of establishment. That means that in three years you have turned over more than one-third of your establishment?—Yes.

K-3800. What is the percentage of skilled and unskilled labour at Lillooah?—(Mr. Ray) : Skilled 9168, unskilled 1140.

K-3801. Why is there such a considerable turnover?—During this period local mills were offering large wages. From January 1929, to the 14th December 1929, excluding those who were medically unfit, only 551 men were discharged. Of these probably 230 may be regarded as having absconded, having been discharged because of absence exceeding two months without any intimation.

K-3802. You only give them three days at Lillooah as compared with 15 days given elsewhere, that is to say, if a man is absent without authority for three days at Lillooah he is called upon to make an explanation and may or may not be dismissed?—Yes.

K-3803. In other places they are allowed 15 days?—Yes.

K-3804. Why is there that difference?—(Mr. Badhwar) : We give them three days in which to intimate the explanation of their absence; if they give no intimation within three days we stop their tickets provisionally. The rule was introduced in order to improve timekeeping. Most of the labour employed at Lillooah live near the shop and so three days is sufficient.

K-3805. Do you think that causes any unrest?—In actual practice not many are discharged because many explain their absence. In this neighbourhood high wages are paid for unloading ships and our people sometimes go away for a few days unloading ships. The rule was brought into force in order to stop that.

K-3806. We have received a good deal of complaint with regard to the housing of the labour employed at the Lillooah workshop. I understand that at Lillooah you make no attempt to house the workshop labour?—(Mr. Colvin) : Generally speaking we do not do so at any of our workshops.

K-3807. I suppose the result is that many of them have to come to Howrah and Calcutta?—Howrah is very near.

K-3808. We spent Saturday morning going round the Howrah slums. Have you been through them?—Yes.

K-3809. Do you suggest that it is reasonable to expect workmen of the type that are employed in your shop, 90 per cent. of them being

skilled, to reside in the *bustis* of Howrah ?—We realise that the conditions are very bad. We borrowed an officer from the Bengal Government to report as to what had better be done. He reported that it was an extremely difficult problem ; if we built houses he did not think our men would live in them. Since then I have been trying to get a definite statement from my men as to whether they would live in the houses if I built them, but they will not take any interest and will not give me an answer.

K-3810. Where would you propose to build the houses ?—Not far from the Bally Bridge where there is good land. We would run trains backwards and forwards.

K-3811. There has been a good deal of unrest at Lillooah. I suppose the bulk of the labour lives in the slums of Howrah. We have been through the slums of Howrah and we are not surprised that people should be discontented if they have to live there ?—Curiously enough they have never made a demand that we should build houses. When we put forward a definite scheme they will not say whether they will come and live in those houses.

K-3812. What do you mean by “ they ” ?—We have approached them through our Welfare Committee.

K-3813. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Do you mean to say that they have never made a demand for houses ?—They have made a demand for free houses or for house allowance in lieu, but not for quarters to be rented for them.

K-3814. *Sir Alexander Murray* : As a result of last year's strike you instituted an enquiry into the housing conditions ?—Yes, and we obtained the report of the officer of the Bengal Government of whom I have spoken.

K-3815. May we have a copy of that report ?—Yes.

K-3816. *Mr. Cliff* : Has any action been taken with regard to improving the conditions ?—Yes, as I have said we have worked out a scheme.

K-3817. Can we have a copy of that scheme ?—Yes.

K-3818. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Will you also let us have copies of the letters or communications that passed between you and the men with a view to arriving at their views ?—Yes.

K-3819. You say the terms of service applicable to the Lillooah workmen are now being reconsidered. What does that mean ?—Terms were offered to them to enable them to come on to monthly rates of pay. None of them have accepted those terms and they have sent in a petition asking for revised terms. That petition has gone to the Railway Board because whatever terms are offered to Lillooah the Railway Board proposes to offer similar terms to all the other railway workshops on State railways. I was at Delhi last week, the Railway Board have promised to give me a definite answer by the end of this month and I have told the men that.

K-3820. May we have a copy of the altered terms ?—Yes, when it is out.

K-3821. I understand that your co-operative society grants loans only to men who are members of the provident fund ?—That is right.

K-3822. There is no provision for anybody who is not a member of the provident fund ?—Yes. Anybody who receives from Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 a month can voluntarily join the provident fund. It is compulsory for men receiving more than Rs. 20.

K-3823. Do a great many of your workers take advantage of that ?—I will not say that. I am going into this question ; I am not satisfied with regard to the men receiving less than Rs. 15 a month.

K-3824. I suppose most of the men in your shops would be receiving more than Rs. 15 ?—Yes.

K-3825. Can Mr. Lancaster tell us with regard to his benefit society for miners ; how many loans there are outstanding at the present moment to miners ?—(*Mr. Lancaster*) : I should think roughly 50 outstanding ; they do not take very many ; we probably have about 8 to 10 every month. They are limited to 3.

K-3826. You will give us the actual figure later on ?—Yes.

K-3827. You bind the borrower ; do you also bind the surety so that he also may lose his lease ?—Yes ; we never have had any trouble.

K-3828. Why was piece work abolished in the shops ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : At Lillooah it was abolished because the men objected to it ; I think they went on strike.

K-3829. Is there any body who was here in 1921 and can tell us from his own experience why it was stopped ?—No, they have all gone. The men would not have it.

K-3830. Since 1921 has there been any attempt to introduce piece work ?—We have thought about it but the opposition has been too strong.

K-3831. *Mr. Birla* : What demand has there been by the workers for housing accommodation ?—They demand free housing ; they have never asked that we should provide houses for them and that they should pay the economic rent.

K-3832. What did the workers demand in the strike of July 1928 ?—They wanted either free houses or a housing allowance in lieu of free housing.

K-3833. You rejected that demand ?—Yes, but we promised to make an enquiry as to whether we could provide houses and charge an economic rent. Since then we have said we are prepared to start on a small scale to see how it works. I think we have given them drawings of the type of quarters and the probable rent to be charged. We have not had a definite reply. We cannot get an answer from the men on that point.

K-3834. I have before me a letter written by you in which you say : " With these two exceptions, I now announce, after consultation with the Government of India, that all the remaining requests are rejected ". You do not say that you are prepared to provide them with houses if they will pay ?—Since then I have put that to them.

K-3835. The suggestion has come from labour quarters that your general attitude towards the labour unions is hostile ; is that a fact ?—This administration would under normal conditions be inclined to be sympathetic towards self-supporting trade unions provided they were really administered and controlled by the members of the staff, and were not in the hands of outsiders who having no sense of responsibility as regards the efficient and economical working of the Railway, no real personal knowledge of the working conditions on the Railway or of its duty to the public fail to appreciate in most cases the real implications of the demands they make, or the extent to which the public might suffer if these demands were granted. But unfortunately conditions out here now-a-days are not normal, and I am therefore by no means sure that at the present time with political feelings running as high as they are in India, railway trade unions really are to the benefit of railway staff. I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that there is a very real and serious risk that whilst the political stress lasts the unions might be captured by political or communistic organizations who would then manipulate them for purposes quite different to those for which they were originally intended. There have already been one or two indications of this danger—the recent Trade Union Congress at Nagpur actually split on this point and the more moderate labour leaders had to secede from that body and form a new organization. The trouble is that a union may be started with the best intentions and may for a bit be conducted on sound lines and yet there is no guarantee that it may not either gradually or suddenly be captured by some organization whose aims are frankly political or communistic and then utilized for the purpose of these aims, and not for the purpose of ameliorating the conditions of the workmen. For the time being at any rate I therefore consider that the interests of the staff will be more likely to be better served by a well-designed and progressive organization of welfare committees than by trade unions organizations. The welfare committee organization helps to build up amongst the staff the trade union spirit whilst at the same time it does not offer the same opportunities to the political or communistic agitator. Incidentally the welfare committee system is akin to the indigenous system of *panchayats*, and whether trade unionism develops out here or not, I consider there is plenty of scope for the welfare organization.

K-3836. You would rather encourage these welfare committees than encourage unions ?—Yes, generally.

K-3837. Because you think that even though they might be started by genuine working men they might be captured for political purposes and therefore you are discouraging them ?—I would not say discourage them but I would not go out of my way to encourage them while this political stress exists here.

K-3838. You say you would not encourage them ?—I would not go out of my way to encourage them.

K-3839. What has been your attitude so far towards the existing unions ?—I have 3 unions. The union calling itself the Khagaul Union undoubtedly became communists ; they got money from Russia. If you want the facts for that I must refer you to the Bengal Government. They had in their organization men like Shibnath Banerjee and Phillip Spratt



who is now under trial and several other admittedly communist office-holders. There is a union at Lucknow about which I do not know very much ; we do not have much to do with it ; it seems to me rather moribund. The Moradabad Union seems to be a bigger union but it only seems to take in the staff of the old O. & R. section.

K-3840. Then there is the Lillooah Labour Union ?—I do not know anything about that ; they have not come my way.

K-3841. You seem to be hostile to some of the unions because you think they have communistic tendencies and you are indifferent to the other unions ?—We had unfortunate experiences with the Howrah Union.

K-3842. The welfare committees have been working for many years ; what achievement has so far been there to the credit of these welfare committees ?—They have done a good deal of very useful work in bringing grievances to notice which we were able to adjust.

K-3843. *Sir Alexander Murray* : I understand copies of your minutes are sent to the members ?—(*Mr. Evans*) : Yes.

K-3844. Are they sent to each member ?—Yes.

K-3845. Can you give us a copy of the minutes of your meetings and also a list of anything you have done since August 1928 which would justify the existence of the welfare committees ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : I suppose you do not want a complete list of everything we have done because we have done such a lot. I presume a sample will do.

K-3846. *Mr. Birla* : I should like to have a general picture of what the welfare committees have done so far ?—(*Mr. Evans*) : There are certain general subjects that are discussed such as housing, quarters, rates of pay, overtime and mileage. Speaking generally, I can say that 40 to 50 per cent. of all the requests have been complied with. It is quite wrong to say nothing has been done.

K-3847. *Mr. Cliff* : You speak of wages. Since August 1928, can you tell us what recommendations of the committee with regard to increased wages have been carried into effect ?—That is with regard to the wages of individuals ; I do not think that the general question of raising wages has ever been discussed by the Welfare Committee ; it is such a general question that we do not touch it.

K-3848. Take the question of individual adjustment of wages since August 1928 ; will you tell us how many people have been effected by increased wages ?—I could not.

K-3849. Can you say what have been the results of representations with regard to the provision of new housing quarters ?—A great deal has been done in that respect ; as a direct result of the representations of the Welfare Committee a large housing scheme was prepared for housing the staff at Moradabad but this scheme is held up for want of money. A certain amount of money has been put aside for buying the land and that is under negotiation with the civil authorities ; the rest is dependent on the money being allotted.

K-3850. I want to see what work the welfare committees do. Up to date has a house been allotted ?—The Welfare Committee has been in

operation for two years and you cannot do this all of a sudden. It is all dependent on the big scheme.

K-3851. You tell us that 40 or 50 per cent. of the representations of the Welfare Committee had been acceded to and you mention the two subjects of wages and provision of housing quarters. As I understand it the Welfare Committee in your view represents the men ?—Yes.

K-3852. What results have there been with regard to these two problems ? Am I to take your answer to be that with regard to general wages no improvement has taken place and that with regard to the provision of new houses not a single new house has been built ?—I could not tell you what has actually been done ; I only know that schemes have been prepared with regard to housing and will be carried out as a direct result of the representations of the Welfare Committee. I can give you the details afterwards.

K-3853. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You will supply us with copies of the minutes of meetings and will also give us information as to what has been done with regard to Moradabad ?—Yes.

K-3854. *Mr. Birla* : Am I to understand that at various times various schemes have been discussed in these welfare committees but nothing has been done so far ?—That is not correct.

K-3855. Do you mean there was demand for housing but the schemes had to be turned down for lack of money ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : I will not say “ turned down ” but postponed.

K-3856. Have these welfare committees taken any interest in such questions as recreation, cinema shows, education, sanitation and that sort of thing ?—(*Mr. Evans*) : Yes, they have.

K-3857. Have they been spending any money ?—The shortage of money is the great obstacle ; the will is there. (*Mr. Colvin*) : As regards recreation a great deal of money has been spent.

K-3858. Is that done under the supervision of these welfare committees ?—Yes, to a large extent. We give a grant for sports and sports are rather given into the hands of the welfare committees to run. Generally speaking for divisional sports I give Rs. 1,000. That grant is given to the Divisional Superintendent who gets members of a welfare committee to advise him as to how it should be spent.

K-3859. What is the respective expenditure on European and Indian Institutes ?—Since 1912, 14 Indian Institutes have been built by the administration and 12 others have been opened and have been provided with funds. In the same period two European Institutes have been built. The fact of the matter is that it is only in comparatively recent years we have had this demand for Indian Institutes. Before this there was no demand ; but now that there is the demand the proportion is something like 12 Indian Institutes to one European Institute.

K-3860. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is the relative expenditure ?—It would take a good deal of time to work that out.

K-3861. *Mr. Cliff* : Is all this money provided out of railway revenue ? No, not all of it. The capital expenditure is all from railway revenue ;

Rs. 75,000 a year is the limit laid down by the Railway Board. We are trying to get them to give us a rather generous allotment.

K-3862. *Mr. Birla* : Will you let us know the annual grants you are making to Indian and European Institutes ?—Yes.

K-3863. Have you any views with regard to sickness insurance ?—No ; I have never considered the question.

K-3864. Complaints have been made with regard to racial discrimination as to accommodation, education, recreation and other matters. Does racial discrimination exist or are the complaints which have been made without any basis ?—In the past there is no doubt about it, there was a great deal of racial discrimination when it was a company's railway in the old days ; but in the policy now laid down I do not think there is any racial discrimination. In out of the way corners one sometimes finds vestiges of racial discrimination. The other day when going through some rules with regard to the Red Cross I found an example of racial discrimination and I immediately stopped it. At the present moment so far as I know, there is no racial discrimination except with regard to Sunday allowances for the running staff. We are considering what we can do with regard to that ; I do not think we can alter it for the existing staff but for the new entrants we must do away with that. As far as I know that is the only example of racial discrimination remaining.

K-3865. It appears from your memorandum that considerably more money is spent on the education of Europeans and Anglo-Indians than on the education of Indians ?—The policy with regard to education is now being considered by the Railway Board. There is a considerable discrimination because the Europeans and Anglo-Indians receive grants towards sending their children to hill stations while the Indians do not. We are waiting to get a final policy laid down.

K-3866. You agree that things have been very unsatisfactory so far ?—I would not say unsatisfactory ; we have provided schools where no schools existed. There are plenty of schools for the Indians run by the provincial authorities while there are very few for the Europeans. We have therefore been compelled to provide schools for Europeans because if we do not no one else will.

K-3867. Looking at your memorandum it appears that 7258 boys are receiving education in Indian primary schools on which you are spending Rs. 7,294. That is about Re. 1 per annum per boy ?—It is more expensive to educate a European and an Anglo-Indian than to educate an Indian.

K-3868. It is in the proportion of 1 to 207 ?—The whole of that question is under examination. We are waiting for the Central Government to decide upon and apply a policy to all railways. We think really that all this education should be provided by the Provincial Government and not by the railways at all ; we have been spending money because the Provincial Government did not do its duty.

K-3869. *Mr. Cliff* : This morning you gave a written answer as to your policy with regard to trade unions. I take it that is a considered statement of policy as to the attitude of your Agency to the railway trade unions ?—Yes.

K-3870. You say " This administration would under normal conditions be inclined to be sympathetic." What do you mean by " normal conditions " ?—When political feelings are not running riot as they are at present.

K-3871. How long have political feelings been running riot ?—I only came out in 1921 ; they were certainly running riot in 1921-22 ; then things calmed down again but during the last 18 months I think they have got rather more acute.

K-3872. Have you any indication as to how long they are likely to run riot ?—You must ask the Central Government that.

K-3873. You say that under normal conditions you would be inclined to be sympathetic. Would you be nothing more than " inclined " ?—An inclination usually means action to follow.

K-3874. So that if you got the kind of trade union that you postulate, may we take it there would be recognition ?—Even now there is recognition ; we do recognize the Moradabad Union. We recognized the Howrah Khagaul Union at one time, but owing to certain circumstances which occurred, with the consent of the Railway Board, we withdrew our recognition from that union.

K-3875. Did the union put to you certain demands at the time of the last dispute at the Lillooah Workshop ?—Several.

K-3876. Did you meet a deputation ?—Yes.

K-3877. Was that the union from which you had withdrawn recognition ?—Yes.

K-3878. The members of the union say that during the general strike workers waited upon the Agent in a deputation with certain demands. You issued a notice in which you said " I am also pleased to announce that, with the approval of the Railway Board, I am arranging for an enquiry to be held into the housing conditions of the workshop staff at Lillooah with a view to seeing if and how these conditions can be improved." Has any communication been made to that union since that date ?—No.

K-3879. Can you tell us the reason ?—Because we are not recognising it.

K-3880. You did recognize them when there was a sudden rupture ?—Yes, but we subsequently said we were not prepared to recognize them ; we said so in a printed notification which I am afraid I have not got with me.

K-3881. Do you think that if you recognize them when there was a strike and then refuse to recognize them when there is not a strike, they are inclined to believe that *force majeure* is the most effective way of compelling attention ?—Not in this particular case. The reason why we decided not to recognize them was that facts came to our notice during the strike which made us decide we could not recognize them.

K-3882. What would you consider to be the necessary qualifications of a welfare officer appointed by the administration ?—We want some body who can speak the language well, who understands the men, who shows signs of sympathy with the men and has a fair working knowledge of railway conditions. We do not call him a welfare officer ; we

call him the employment officer. One such officer was with us 28 years, while Mr. Badhwar has had about 5 years' service and has been up and down the line a good deal ; he is an engineer by profession.

K-3883. For what class of men does he act ?—For the workmen in the Lillooah Workshop.

K-3884. Has he experience of shop conditions on your railway ?—He had not originally experience of conditions in big shops but he had had engineering shop experience.

K-3885. How many men do you think you will require as employment officers to cover the whole of your system ?—We have only 3 big workshops ; Jamalpur, Lillooah and Lucknow.

K-3886. Then there is your running staff ?—For them we have personnel officers.

K-3887. How many employment officers will you require to cover the whole of them ?—We have six divisions ; we shall want one man in each division ; that is to say, a senior man who may need assistants. That would mean six men for the divisions and the workshops would be in addition.

K-3888. How is the employment officer to get into contact with the labour ?—He deals with all personnel cases ; he travels about a good deal ; he will probably have to have more assistants by degrees.

K-3889. Are you going to have welfare officers fully cognizant with all the workings of the railways ?—If you appoint men from the railways in that way, you can be sure of having men who have a general knowledge of the railway.

K-3890. Would you generally assume that a man who is qualified as an engineer or a traffic operator is the best type of man to act as a welfare officer ?—Not necessarily ; we rather take personality into account but we like to have a man who has served his apprenticeship, as it were, on the railway.

K-3891. You refer to the Congress which was held at Nagpur and you give that as an indication of the danger of which you have spoken. You say that the more moderate labour leaders had to secede from that body and form a new organization. Would you recognize a trade union which was affiliated to that moderate body ?—If it represents our staff.

K-3892. Would you recognize it if it has got a membership among your staff ?—Yes, we do in the case of the Moradabad Union now.

K-3893. If a union affiliated to that body has got some one to help them from outside who is not employed on the railway, what objection have you to recognizing that body ?—I have said that I object to its being controlled by outside people ; I do not object to its being assisted by outside people.

K-3894. Do you object to certain outside people assisting the union and becoming officers of the union ?—I think you have got to have a certain number of outside people assisting, because a fairly big union must have some whole-time officers. I was referring more to the general administration and control.

K-3895. So that we may take it that where you have a union formed with a constitution complying with the Indian Trade Unions Act, so far as your Railway is concerned, there is no objection to recognizing that union ?—No, not if it is apparently soundly conducted and represents a fair number of our staff, that is to say, if it really has a biggish membership among our staff.

K-3896. Who is going to determine whether it is soundly conducted ? —Only experience can show that, but I think our tendency would be to assume it was going to be soundly conducted until we found it was not from our point of view.

K-3897. That seems to be an advance on this statement. Take the case of a new union beginning on your Railway ; at first it would not enrol all the work-people on your Railway, but it might enrol a few. Are you prepared to recognize that union and deal with it ?—If it had, let us say, only six members, I should probably say it was not worth recognizing.

K-3898. But if it got a number of members, would you be prepared to deal with it ?—Especially if we were satisfied it was controlled by the members of the staff.

K-3899. The Indian Legislature has laid down certain conditions with regard to its control ; I take it that as representing the railway administration you are prepared to accept what they have laid down ?—We are normally prepared to recognize anything that has been registered under the Indian Trade Unions Act, unless events show that something has gone wrong, as occurred in the case of the Union at Khagaul.

K-3900. Are you prepared to set up on your Railway, in conjunction with the unions, recognized machinery for the prevention and settlement of disputes ?—It depends what you mean by “ machinery ”. We are prepared to deal with unions, receive representations from them and give attention to them.

K-3901. Are you prepared to set up permanent joint standing machinery whereby matters arising out of the employment of the work-people can be regularly dealt with ?—I shall have to give that consideration ; I am not quite clear what you mean by “ joint standing machinery ”.

K-3902. That should an application be made to you from the trade unions that they desire to have a board set up representative of themselves and of the administration for the consideration of matters arising out of their employment, including hours of labour, wages and conditions ; that that board should have regular meetings in order that these matters may be frankly considered and discussed between the parties ; would you take that as a rough idea of what I mean by “ joint standing machinery ” and will you tell me what are the practical objections to that ?—I shall need time to consider that.

K-3903. I understand you have been considering this matter for some long time ?—When recognizing a union, we receive representations from them and give consideration to those representations. I cannot answer that question straightaway and I certainly cannot speak for the Railway Board.

K-3904. You raise coal by the aid of a raising contractor whom you pay for the total coal raised. What is there in that system which is designed for the welfare of labour ?—(*Mr. Whitworth*) : We have contractors for practically all the railway collieries. The reason why we appoint contractors is that we find it extremely difficult to regulate labour without them.

K-3905. What do you mean by ' regulating labour ' ?—In the first instance recruiting labour.

K-3906. We are told that at Giridih there is practically no recruitment of labour ?—(*Mr. Lancaster*) : The reason is that contiguous villages are outside our estate and we are bound to have a certain percentage of labour from the outlying villages. We have no control over these as regards bringing them into work and the men employed as contractors are *Jhumdars*. If these contractors who control the outside labour were not employed at our colliery, they would force their labour to go elsewhere, say to Jharia or Raneegung.

K-3907. Do not the bulk of the coal-cutters live on your estate ?—A considerable percentage live outside, though the majority live inside.

K-3908. What real control does the East Indian Railway Company exercise over wages and conditions in Giridih colliery ?—We fix the coal-cutting rates and other rates in consultation ; the contractor's rates are worked out.

K-3909. Last year you reduced the rates of the contractors. Did you not ?—Yes.

K-3910. What change did you arrange should be made in the rates paid to labour ?—No change as far as I remember.

K-3911. And yet in point of fact a reduction took place in the labour's rate ?—I do not think so.

K-3912. The evidence given to us at Giridih was that the rates paid to labour were reduced following upon the contractor's rate being reduced ?—No, the rates were reduced before that.

K-3913. When you reduced the rate paid to the contractor last year, did you specify that there should be a reduction in the rate paid to labourers ?—I specified that there should be no reduction below the minimum paid under similar conditions to our own sarkari labour.

K-3914. In the mine at Giridih, the evidence given to us was, for instance, that the haulage trolleyman who had previously worked three 8-hour shifts were put on two shifts of 12 hours and that a lower rate was paid. How do you exercise control over that ?—They are quite at liberty to come to us and complain when their rate is lowered. If they do not come to us, we are helpless. We are quite accessible.

K-3915. How do you exercise control over leads and bad working places ?—That is left principally to the discretion of the Manager and his staff ; he manages the mine.

K-3916. Has the Manager power to enforce an increased rate for the long lead and a bad working place ?—The Manager and his staff naturally have the local conditions at their finger-tips and they are, in my opinion, competent to do so.

K-3917. Then can they force a contractor to pay a higher rate in those cases ?—They can do so and I know it has been done ; they can tell him he has got to pay more.

K-3918. It does not appear to be done. I want to deal with it as a point of principle and see what valid objection there can be to the railway administration paying rates direct to the labour ?—No objection at all, provided that the labour is a sure supply under our own control : but if it is beyond our control what can we do ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : We will certainly go into the question.

K-3919. We went down the mine and walked nearly a mile from the shaft to the extreme end of the pit. We found that men were working in an atmosphere in which they could not possibly work more than half an hour at a time. There was a long lead. On the surface the Commission could not understand why the men could not load more than two tubs a day, but when we went to the spot, we could understand something of their difficulties. As far as the Manager is concerned, he does not appear to have sufficient time with his other duties to consider the complaints of these people ?—(*Mr. Lancaster*) : I think he would have.

K-3920. What real opportunity have the workers of dealing with wages and conditions under this administration ?—In the first place, they have access to the Under-manager, to the Manager and finally to myself. I can assure you that we look into everything of which complaint is made and we endeavour, as far as possible, to make working conditions as easy as possible.

K-3921. Surely you know that the Manager of the mine says that, if he has to attend to these complaints, he would not get his work done ?—I did not hear his evidence.

K-3922. But as a practical man, surely you know that is the position ?—No ; he has got a staff.

K-3923. Is it your view that dealing with the mines the Manager of the mine could act as a personnel officer ?—Yes, he can for the benefit of his labour.

K-3924. When do they pay wages at Giridih ?—On Saturdays and Sundays. The coal cutters and loaders are paid on Sunday morning.

K-3925. Having regard to the welfare of the labour, would it not be possible to pay wages on some day other than Sunday ?—It would be possible, but I do not see any reason why the day should be changed ; Sunday is the bazaar day and it is a holiday.

K-3926. Do you think the people should have to spend their day of rest in drawing their wages ?—They do not spend the whole of the day drawing wages.

K-3927. They spend a considerable portion of the day drawing their wages. Do they not ?—I think you will find that most payments have finished from 9 o'clock to half past nine. It would not be possible to pay them on some other day, because, for instance, the night-shift would be going down. The night-shift, some of whom live a considerable distance from the estate, would have to come in specially early to receive payment and then go to work.



K-3928. Surely this is a matter of organization ?—No, it is not ; it is a matter of convenience for them.

K-3929. These same people have to make a special journey on Sunday ?—As a matter of fact, it does not concern us, as the management, whether they are paid on Saturday which is a working day, or Sunday, it is simply a question of the convenience of these people ; they prefer to have their money on Sunday morning, that being bazaar day, and they go off and spend it.

K-3930. Would it not be better that the railway administration should pay the wages direct to the individuals who earned them ?—If they are directly appointed by us, yes.

K-3931. But would it not be much better that the railway people, being responsible for the coal raising, should pay each miner themselves ?—I do not think we could pay contractor's labour. It would be almost impossible in the case of the quarries. We could pay our own people, but I do not think we could pay the outsiders.

K-3932. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : What is the number employed under the contractor at Giridih compared with the number employed direct ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : At Giridih alone it is 6,740 departmental and 4,492 by contractors ; those are the figures for 1929. A little over 60 per cent. is direct labour.

K-3933. *Sir Alexander Murray* : That is the whole of your labour, not coal cutters only. We understand from Mr. Lancaster that you have given your coal cutters land which keeps them on the property, and therefore it is probable that the percentage of coal cutters who could be paid departmentally would be much larger than the figures given here ?—(*Mr. Lancaster*) : Quite possibly. The difficulty would be that we should be rather interfering with another man's work. I think in all work the contractor pays his own labour. Inside we have petty contractors running haulage ; they employ mostly insiders but they are not coal cutters ; they are ordinary coolies. We could hardly take the responsibility of paying those men who are the labour of the petty contractors.

K-3934. You have tied on your land thousands of workers, and what we have been unable to understand is why it has been necessary to interpose a contractor or a petty contractor between you and your own tenants ?—It has been the custom at the colliery from the very commencement ; there is nothing new in it, and I see no objection to it. With regard to underground mechanical haulage, screening and so on, all the responsibility of getting the coal out is on the shoulders of one man, whereas if the work is done departmentally that is not so ; there are many people who may be blamed for what is possibly one man's responsibility.

K-3935. But many mines do it *sarkari* ?—I know, but it means a great deal of supervision and also results in theft of coal.

K-3936. You appear to be an out and out advocate of contractor labour as against *sarkari* ?—Where you can get a good petty contractor it is a far sounder principle because then you have the petty contractor responsible to you for doing a single kind of work, and if his

rate is sufficient his labour need not suffer. We go very carefully into the rate ; we count all the men that are employed by that contractor, we work out the men's wages and calculate what the profit will be ; we give the contractor what we consider to be a fair profit. As far as I am aware the labour does not suffer.

K-3937. *Mr. Cliff* : Do you approve of the present system of paying men through *sardars* too ?—We do not pay them through *sardars*. We pay them through gangmen and petty contractors. We do not call them *sardars* ; we call them heads of gangs.

K-3938. Do you approve of that system of payment of wages ?—Yes.

K-3939. Where a man is unable to earn owing to shortage of tubs or owing to bad working places, would you be in favour of a minimum earning ?—I think usually such conditions govern the ruling of rates in the collieries. Rates are increased periodically and reduced periodically, and in the case of a big district I personally go down to the Manager and look into matters myself.

K-3940. Our evidence is to the contrary. If people are willing to work but are prevented from working either through shortage of tubs or through bad working places, under those conditions are you prepared to approve of the principle that those men shall be conceded a minimum rate ?—It depends on what that minimum rate is. I have a minimum rate. My minimum rate is now 5 annas.

K-3941. If you have the principle of a minimum rate in operation in your colliery, that is the answer ?—Yes.

K-3942. Is that applicable to all the collieries of the East Indian Railway ?—Yes.

K-3943. *Col. Russell* : I understand the old policy at Giridih was that people should be allowed to build their own houses, material being given to them. What was the reason for changing that policy and putting up heavy brick structures in blocks ?—That was done before I took charge, but the reason was that the labour pressed at the time for us to construct and repair their houses and that request was conceded.

K-3944. It is said in the memorandum that the general health of the community is good. Would you agree with that statement ?—(*Dr. Pollock*) : As compared with other years, yes.

K-3945. I suppose that remark is based on the statistics which are given therein ?—Yes.

K-3946. Taking the year 1928-29 the number of births was 495. We were told that the population on the estates is 25,406. That gives a birth rate of 19.5, while the death rate works out at 9.2. That is a death rate far better than that of towns in England ?—My statistics for Giridih are a little different. The total mortality is 235, while the infant mortality is 89. The total mortality includes the infant mortality. But it is impossible for me to keep the infant mortality ; Mr. Lancaster keeps that. The population according to my statistics is 25,460. The number of reported deaths last year was 149 ; therefore the death rate per thousand is 5.9.

K-3947. Do you think that is possible ?—Yes. A little further on you will see the death rate for the whole of the East Indian Railway which is not much higher.

K-3948. But we are dealing now with a colliery population of men, women and children ?—This only refers to people who are being treated by my staff ; that is to say people who are in communication with my staff. I have no knowledge of deaths in the villages outside of people who are not treated by my staff, of whom it is not possible to keep statistics. If a man dies in an outlying district where he is being treated by a *hakim* or even an outside practitioner, the medical department have no knowledge of this death. The Colliery Superintendent may have knowledge of his death but we have none.

K-3949. In your memorandum it is said “ There are well equipped hospitals at Giridih and Bokaro with a well qualified and efficient medical staff.” Are you satisfied as to that ?—Yes.

K-3950. Have you any lady medical officer ?—No, none.

K-3951. Have you any nurses in the hospital ?—No.

K-3952. Or any trained *dais* ?—Not in our employment.

K-3953. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Are you satisfied with that state of things ?—Yes ; there has been no demand for them.

K-3954. In spite of the fact that you have a large number of female labour ?—Yes. I have discussed the matter with the Colliery Superintendent and he is not of opinion that that would be of very much use ; the labour is so scattered and it is very difficult to get these women into hospital ; I doubt whether they would come in at all.

K-3955. *Col. Russell* : When we were at Giridih we were told that although it states here that the medical facilities are used to the fullest possible extent, last year there were only 60 in-patients in the hospital ?—Seventy-five is my number.

K-3956. Do you still think that it is being used to the fullest extent ?—The difficulty at Giridih is that the people do not want to go into hospital. It is only with the greatest difficulty we get them in ; they prefer to be treated in their own houses.

K-3957. If you had a lady medical officer, nurses in the hospital and perhaps health visitors and trained *dais*, do you not think you would get them to make use of their opportunities more than they are doing ?—It is very doubtful with regard to the women medical officers. I have discussed this with the Colliery Superintendent and he is of opinion—and I entirely agree with him—that the women medical officers would have to go to the patients in the outlying villages ; the patients would not come to them. I have no objection to having women medical officers, but I very much doubt whether it would be a success.

K-3958. The Commission has already seen that these lady medical officers and nurses are employed with success in jute mills ?—Yes, where labour is all concentrated in one place ; at Giridih there are miles of scattered villages.

K-3959. What is the nature of the water supply in Giridih collieries ?—It is obtained from wells.

K-3960. Is any water obtained from underground workings ?—(*Mr. Lancaster*) : There are two sources of supply ; one is obtained from some abandoned working. That supply is absolutely pure. It is pumped to a hill tank. The other is from wells.

K-3961. Are these water supplies purified or disinfected at intervals ?—One is roughly filtered.

K-3962. I understand the Giridih area is constantly infected with cholera ?—(*Dr. Pollock*) : Not to my knowledge.

K-3963. Are washing and bathing places provided for the workers ?—(*Mr. Lancaster*) : There is a washing place provided at the central pit with the pump delivery going into it. There is another one at the Jubilee pit, and there are taps all over the colliery for washing.

K-3964. Are you satisfied that those are sufficient ?—Yes.

K-3965. In your memorandum it is stated “ Sanitary arrangements are provided as required by law ”. I do not understand that ?—That refers to the Factories Act. The workshop comes under the Factories Act and under the Act we have to provide latrines. (*Dr. Pollock*) : The conservancy arrangements on the East Indian Railway are not under the medical department ; they are under the engineering department ; I have no control over the conservancy arrangements.

K-3966. Do you think that is a reasonable position ?—I think it would be better to have it under the medical department.

K-3967. Have you any control over sanitary inspectors working in the Giridih colliery area ?—None whatever.

K-3968. Have you ever asked to be given control ?—Yes ; not in Giridih but on the East Indian Railway.

K-3969. Have you control over these officials in the other parts of the railway system ?—No.

K-3970. Do you not think it is rather outside the function of an engineering department to be in control of public health officers ?—They are not in control of public health ; they are in control of the staff which controls the public health of the station. I have no public health under me.

K-3971. But you have Sanitary Inspectors on the Railway ?—Yes, but not under me.

K-3972. They are under the Engineers ?—Yes.

K-3973. Do you think that is satisfactory ?—I would rather they were under me.

K-3974. *Mr. Cliff*.—Are the Engineers in control of health on the East Indian Railway ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : They control the sanitary staff, but of course they have to meet and carry out any criticism from the medical officers.

K-3975. Would it be possible for this matter to be reviewed ?—Certainly.

K-3976. Could the Commission be informed of your conclusions as to the best policy to be adopted over your Railway ?—Yes.

K-3977. *Col. Russell* : In Giridih I understand that even the Registrar of births and deaths is not under the medical staff ?—(*Dr. Pollock*) : Yes.

K-3978. Under whom is it done ?—(*Mr. Lancaster*) : I supply the Chief Medical Officer with the figures ; my *zamindari* department visits villages daily and keeps a record of births and deaths.

K-3979. So that the medical department really has to accept figures over the preparation of which they have no control ?—I think on the whole they are accurate ; that applies only to the estate, not outside.

K-3980. Does the same state of things exist with regard to control of epidemics ?—(*Dr. Pollock*) : All epidemic diseases are notified to the medical department.

K-3981. By whom ?—If we do not hear anything about it it is notified presumably by the Colliery Superintendent in the outlying districts ; but on our own estate we should know about it.

K-3982. Over the whole railway administration do you not think it would be advisable to have all public health work and administration under the Chief Medical Officer rather than under Engineers ?—I most certainly do.

K-3983. Dealing with Giridih, you say “ Members of the staff are trained in first-aid ”. What is the number and status of the staff who are trained in first-aid ?—The figures are very bad for last year as to which we had no control, as no books were published in Urdu or Hindi. We have only just received the books ; that is the fault of the St. John's Ambulance people at Lahore. Up to the 31st December 1929 the total number trained was 663, the total cost was Rs. 565 ; the total number who failed was 98. That is for Giridih alone. This year we have done practically no work among the non-English speaking community. We are doing intensive training of the whole of the Indian staff.

K-3984. With regard to hospitals and dispensaries you say that full advantage of these facilities is taken and the treatment is free. This morning we have had considerable evidence to the contrary. The East Indian Railway Labour Unions state in their memorandum that although there are 3 railway hospitals they are not in any way helpful to the workmen and their families ?—Our statistics show that that must be wrong in view of the number of people who are treated in the dispensaries and hospitals during the year.

K-3985. The Union say that the hospitals are used more for examining the workmen. I suppose that is with regard to granting certificates. This was stated at Lillooah ?—We have a small hospital at Lillooah. The reason why we have only a small hospital there is because we are close to Calcutta, and they have always preferred to come into Calcutta.

K-3986. Is it always possible for a patient to get a bed in the Calcutta hospitals ?—No, not more than it would be possible in a railway hospital unless it was an enormous place.

K-3987. Do you refuse to accept certificates from private medical practitioners ?—Certainly not ; we have recognized rules as to that, and we try to adhere to the rules as much as possible. If we had no rules we could maintain no discipline ; we are bound to maintain discipline. We accept the certificate of private practitioners provided they are in order and in accordance with the rules as laid down by the Agent's circular. If a man falls sick when he is living in railway quarters he naturally must in the first place send for the railway doctor. If he is living outside he may have his own private practitioner ; he must notify the doctor under whom he would be under ordinary circumstances when he is sick ; we then wait for him to come back and bring the sick certificate with him. When he brings the sick certificate, provided it is in order and is signed by a registered medical practitioner, we accept that certificate and we give the man a sick certificate on our own form. Recommendations for long periods of leave are not accepted from outside ; naturally they cannot be. Any outsider might send in a certificate and say he recommends that the man should have six months' leave, while we may not have seen the man at all. The rule as laid down is that as soon as a man is fit to travel he must report to the nearest railway doctor. (*Mr. Colvin*) : We accept from an outside practitioner a certificate to the effect that the man has been too ill to come and see the railway doctor. As soon as the man is fit to travel we expect him to come and report to our Medical Officer. (*Dr. Pollock*) : A sick certificate is very rarely refused ; it is only refused when there is very good reason.

K-3988. The Union lays stress on the point that it was difficult to get free treatment from the hospital or the medical staff and they say that practically every medical officer on the East Indian Railway preferred to be paid ?—We have Medical Officers, Assistant Surgeons and Sub-Assistant Surgeons.

K-3989. I take it they were referring to the medical officers in charge of dispensaries and people like that ?—They meant the subordinate staff.

K-3990. They said they had to spend a considerable amount of money in tips for medical services and sick leave ?—I can only tell you that we do our best to get honest and well qualified men and we hope that sort of thing does not go on. I have investigated several cases in which accusations of illegal gratifications have been made but I have never been able to obtain any evidence worth anything at all and I have never been able to obtain a conviction. I think we pay as well as any service in India. I cannot absolutely refute this statement. It is the invariable rule that as soon as a man is refused sick leave he accuses the doctor who refuses him sick leave of taking an illegal gratification.

K-3991. Do those who get sick leave have to pay an illegal gratification ?—I cannot say ; I do my best to get honest men.

K-3992. These two certificates were handed in to us this morning (handing same to the witnesses). The complaint was made that the remarks which are written underneath the printed form refer to correspondence between one officer and another officer with a view to getting this man certified as being unfit for further service ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : It says that the man is reporting sick having been hurt on duty, but that an opportunity should be taken to cover his service with M-4 certificate.

I have looked up the M-4 certificate ; it is a first class health certificate. On the face of it what would appear to have happened is this : that this running shed foreman found that by some error this man had never had a certificate when he joined the Railway. M-4 certificate is the ordinary health certificate which is given when a man joins the Railway. On the face of it this seems to be a perfectly harmless letter, but if you like I will make further enquiries.

K-3993. In your memorandum it is said with regard to lower grade staff that "when quarters are not available they are not given any allowance in lieu." Is that the general principle on the Railway ?—That is the general principle ; in some cases they do get allowances but generally speaking they do not.

K-3994. Then you say there are 5 district hospitals, each with its nursing staff, providing 224 beds for Europeans and Indians. How many nurses have you in these 5 hospitals ?—Fifteen in the 5.

K-3995. How many beds for Europeans and for Indians are there in the 5 hospitals ?—(*Dr. Pollock*) : These are the figures :—

Station.	European.	High class Indian.	Menial.	Total.
Asansol .. .. .	10	2	8	20
Jamalpur .. .. .	22	12	12	46
Dhanbad .. .. .	18	12	10	40
Allahabad .. .. .	28	10	20	58
Tundla .. .. .	14	4	16	34

K-3996. Are you satisfied with the working of the sanitary committee ?—No, I am not satisfied with them because there is never any money to do anything that they recommend ; the recommendations are all right.

K-3997. You say that the sanitary conditions under which the staff live and work are as good as possible ?—That means with the money available.

K-3998. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you ever sent a representation to the Agent or has the Agent ever sent up a representation to the Railway Board saying that there is not enough money for the sanitary staff ?—I am constantly complaining that I must have various things done, but the answer is always that the money is not available. (*Mr. Colvin*) : Every year I try to get money out of the Board for all purposes.

K-3999. In paragraph 26 it says that in all large stations there are water borne sewage systems with septic tanks. How many stations does that refer to ?—(*Mr. Venables*) : We have them at Howrah, Lillooah, Burdwan, Asansol, Dhanbad, Sitarampur, Sahebgunge, Jamalpur, Lucknow, Fyzabad, Partabgarh, Rae Bareilly, Dehra Dun, Rosa, Kiul and Dinapur.

K-4000. Have all these stations got water borne sewage systems with septic tanks ?—Yes.

K-4001. Are they all working well without any scarcity of water ?—We cannot put them in until we have an assured supply of water. We must have that first.

K-4002. *Col. Gidney* : How many district medical officers have you ?—(*Dr. Pollock*) : Fifteen.

K-4003. How many are on leave outside India ?—None.

K-4004. The extent of your line is 4,000 miles and you have 160,000 employees ?—They tell me so.

K-4005. I want to know what you know, not what you are told. With dependants of employees would that make a total of half a million people ?—We calculate the total number by multiplying the employees by three.

K-4006. So that you have 15 medical officers to attend to the medical and public health needs of nearly 650,000 people ?—Yes, 15 medical officers.

K-4007. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Do you look after the wives and children too ?—Medical officers do if the families wish it ; there is no compulsion ; they do not have to come to us. Each medical officer has his staff.

K-4008. *Col. Gidney* : It means that each medical officer has to look after 15,000 employees and 400 miles of line ?—Yes, that is about an average.

K-4009. You have 5 district hospitals ?—Yes.

K-4010. You have 15 medical officers, 20 Assistant Surgeons and 102 Sub-Assistant Surgeons ?—Yes.

K-4011. Do you think that is adequate ?—I think the medical officers at the present time are adequate, but I could do with a much larger staff in the way of Sub-Assistant Surgeons and Assistant Surgeons.

K-4012. When the medical officer in charge of the district is away from headquarters who looks after his sick of all grades ?—He will be away at the most for a day. His staff look after the urgent cases. I have asked for more nurses.

K-4013. Have you Indian nurses ?—No. We have 4 midwives.

K-4014. Would you advocate the training of Indian nurses ?—If I could get well trained nurses, I have no objection ; but so far I have had no demand.

K-4015. Do you think 5 district hospitals are adequate ?—No, I do not think so. We are building more.

K-4016. You have 220 beds for the entire railway system ; do you think that is enough ?—No, I do not.

K-4017. At Asansol if a man is seriously ill, let us say with pneumonia, and there is no accommodation for him in the railway hospital, what happens to him ?—Then he would have to be nursed in his own house ; we could not move him if he was suffering severely from pneumonia.

K-4018. I am well aware of that obvious fact, but what happens to a man if he lives 5 miles away ?—He will not be 5 miles away if he



is living in railway quarters. We have only to attend people within a mile and a half though we do our best for those living further away.

K-4019. Then you are not really in medical charge of all railway employees and many have to fend for themselves?—Certainly not if they live 5 miles outside the railway estate.

K-4020. If a railway employee goes away on casual leave for 5 days, falls ill, an event which is quite possible, and then submits a medical certificate signed by a private practitioner, do you accept it?—It depends who gives the medical certificate.

K-4021. Oh ! Suppose I give a man a medical certificate ; would you accept it ?—What reason could I have for not accepting it ?

K-4022. That does not answer my question ; suppose a man who was on casual leave fell ill ; I attended him and gave him a medical certificate, in which I did not write that he was incapable of leaving his bed, to appear before his railway doctor, would you accept it ?—I should certainly accept it from you or any body else.

K-4023. But do your rules on medical certificates insist that the certificate must state that he is incapable of leaving his bed ?—If you said he was incapable of returning to duty I should assume that.

K-4024. That does not answer my question : do you insist on the certificate stating that the man is unfit to leave his bed and travel ?—No.

K-4025. I have the rules with me. Since when have you altered the rule ?—We have not altered it. (*Mr. Colvin*) : They must produce a certificate from an outside doctor to the effect that during that period they were too ill to attend before the Chief Medical Officer or the District Officer. (*Dr. Pollock*) : I should write to the doctor and ask whether the man was too ill to come and see me for the next fortnight. If the doctor said yes, I should accept it.

K-4026. The Agent admits the rule and you try to qualify it, though the rules are explicit. Would you take a man off the sick list and pass him as fit for duty without seeing him ?—I personally should not if he had been sick.

K-4027. Would you be surprised if I produced a case in which you did so ?—I should be very surprised.

K-4028. A case is quoted in the Anglo-Indian memorandum of an assistant head signaller of Rampurhat who was granted two months' leave by your District Medical Officer at Jamalpur ; he went for treatment for two months to the Tropical School of Medicine but as he became worse he placed himself under the treatment of a leading Calcutta physician, who in July 1929 sent a certificate to you saying that the employee was unable to leave his bed, and recommending an extension of sick leave. This certificate was ignored. Another leading physician's medical certificate was treated similarly. But you signed a certificate on the 29th July last year to the effect that this employee was fit for duty and his name had been removed from the sick list as being fit to resume duty. For this he has been discharged from the railway under Paragraph 2 ?—Will you show me the certificate ?

K-4029. I can and will produce a copy of the certificate. The original is now with the Agent to whom the matter has been reported. Is it the practice of district officers of the railway to urge medical officers to

send sick or convalescing men back to duty because of lack of staff?—They might urge as much as they like but a good doctor would not send anybody back to duty unless he was fit; they may urge but the medical officer should do his duty. That is the only answer I can give you.

K-4030. I ask you as Chief Medical Officer of the East Indian Railway whether this is the practice?—I have never heard of it. I cannot say it never happens.

K-4031. Recently a case was sent to you of an Indian clerk who was ill and certified medically unfit for duty but he was made to attend his railway hospital to present himself before his medical officer daily?—Unless you give his name I cannot tell you.

K-4032. It was one Mr. Banerjee; I was the doctor who attended him; and did you reply to a representation I made to the Agent in these words "He is also aware that the granting of a sick certificate to a railway employee by a doctor not connected with the railway, even though he be an officer of the I. M. S., or even the Director General of the I. M. S., does not enable the employee to break those rules and regulations". What did you mean by that? Do we break rules and regulations to merit this admonition or do your remarks savour of barrack room discipline or what?—That is according to the rules of the E. I. R. As that was a patient of yours this is a personal matter. I stand by every word I have written.

K-4033. I know it refers to a case of mine. I stated so at the onset. But this should not prevent me from referring to it and your answering to my questions?

K-4034. Would you have any objection to changing the term "subordinate staff" on the railways to the term "Non-gazetted staff"?—(Mr. Colvin) : No, I have no objection.

K-4035. Why do you advertise for guards and recruit them direct when you have qualified men in your service fit and waiting to be promoted as guards?—Sometimes we have qualified men and sometimes we have not. When we have qualified men in service we promote them; we do not then recruit from outside.

K-4036. Did you receive an order from the Railway Board to the effect that the replacement of the Anglo-Indian community should not be done abruptly but slowly and gradually?—I cannot remember. The most recent order was that recruitment should not be done on racial grounds.

K-4037. So you are unaware of that order. Have you reduced the number of Anglo-Indian employees on your Railway by 10 per cent. during 1929? I think you have reduced the number by 253?—The figure seems to be correct.

K-4038. Was there any real reason for doing this considering that you have only about 2,000 Anglo-Indians on your Railway?—No, that was due to a large number of people retiring and that sort of thing.

K-4039. What sort of thing. It was not following any principle or policy dictated to you?—No.

K-4040. You will admit that this is a very large reduction during one year?—Of course it varies each year on account of the change in the number of persons retiring and so on.

K-4041. In 1925-26 the number was reduced by 13, in 1926-27 it was increased by 30, and in 1928-29 reduced by 253. At that rate it will not be long before Anglo-Indians will disappear from your Railway ?—If recruitment must not be done on racial grounds obviously the Anglo-Indian recruit has to submit himself to a fiercer competition.

K-4042. Is not an Anglo-Indian considered an Indian for employment on railway ?—But we are not allowed to earmark any post for Anglo-Indians.

K-4043. Is he not considered a statutory Indian from the racial point of view ?—Yes.

K-4044. According to the recommendation of the Central Railway Advisory Committee do you promote 20 per cent. of subordinates to the official grades ?—I think it will be more than that ; it will be near 30 per cent.

K-4045. Would you give the Commission figures regarding such promotions ?—(*Mr. Robertson*) : Yes, I will give the figures.

K-4046. All these are promoted as permanent officers or mainly as officiating officials ?—On the traffic side in the Transportation Department, the officiating subordinates as the term is used, form 4 per cent. ; on the locomotive side they form somewhere near 20 per cent.

K-4047. And they are kept on officiating for years ?—Owing to the vacancies not being available.

K-4048. They do the same duties and have the same status and responsibilities as officers ?—Yes.

K-4049. Subordinates on Rs. 300 per mensem do officiate for junior scale officers whose scale of pay is from Rs. 350 to Rs. 900 per mensem ?—Yes.

K-4050. And for performing such duties you give him only Rs. 10 extra to his subordinate substantive pay ?—Yes.

K-4051. So in this way you convert a subordinate into an official by giving him an extra pittance of Rs. 10 per mensem ?—Yes.

K-4052. You know that on other railways such as the Great Indian Peninsula Railway they get more—the same yearly increments as officials ?—I do not know.

K-4053. Under the 1928 revised rates of wages you give a Ticket Collector Rs. 28 ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : Now the crew system has taken the place of the old system. Under that system the man gets Rs. 35 and an allowance of Rs. 15.

K-4054. But in certain sections Ticket Collectors are still employed on Rs. 28. Rs. 15 is for his travelling expenses. Do you consider that Rs. 35 after compulsory railway deductions of about Rs. 8 per mensem is enough for an Anglo-Indian or European lad to feed and clothe himself well and be an effective member of the Auxiliary Force ?—I think it is not. He might require Rs. 50. The 1928 grades of pay were got out at the desire of the Railway Board and in consultation with them in regard to the basis underlying their preparation. I may add that I might be in some difficulty in answering questions about some of the,

details as unfortunately the senior Officer of this Railway who prepared these scales of pay had a stroke a few months ago and has since retired from the service.

K-4055. Under the new Railway Board's orders regarding discharges, etc., as published in your Weekly Notice on the 15th January, I understand that before discharge servants with only 10 years' service are given certain protection such as charge sheets, evidence, written statement, and so on ?—These are the Government rules.

K-4056. Do you think that it is right to deny a man of one year's service similar protection ?—Those are not my rules ; those are the Railway Board rules.

K-4057. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Do you recognize any difference between 10 years' service and one year's service ?—A man with 10 years' service has a better claim than a man with one year's service.

K-4058. Does the administration of justice or the redress of injustice tolerate such a distinction in its application ? With regard to workshops are you covenanting any men into your workshops ?—The last case I remember was that of a machine reconditioning specialist.

K-4059. But are they being covenanted now ?—All the appointments are now made by the Public Service Commission.

K-4060. Are you covenanting men for the signalling and interlocking department ?—(*Mr. Venables*) : No, not that I have heard of.

K-4061. The traffic department supplies Traffic Inspectors, the loco department supplies Loco Inspectors and the permanent way department supplies Permanent Way Inspectors. Is there any reason why the signalling department cannot supply Signal Inspectors ?—There is no reason why it should not do so.

K-4062. Then what is the necessity for covenanting any men as Inspectors into that department ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : We are doubtful about that.

K-4063. There is a great difference in the rules governing leave, overtime, allowances, house rent, etc., in the East Indian Railway and the former Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. Would it not be a good thing if you standardized these rules ?—Yes, it would be a very good thing. We are standardizing these for new entrants. We do not feel it quite fair to make the old staff suffer.

K-4064. Do you think that the new types of quarters in Moradabad give sufficient accommodation for married people on your Railway ?—(*Mr. Venables*) : The whole question has been examined by a committee which we hope has arrived at the most comfortable type of accommodation. When money is available we shall construct them.

K-4065. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Did the committee consult the workers ?—Yes.

K-4066. Did you take evidence from them ?—No. The officers are in constant touch with them.

K-4067. Did you get into touch with the Union ?—No, because we have the Welfare Committee.

K-4068. *Col. Gidney* : Would you agree that victimization is practised on your Railway ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : I hope not.

K-4069. If an employee of yours who is secretary of a railway institute tried to obtain the use of the institute from the Divisional Superintendent for the purpose of addressing employees to obtain material to prepare a memorandum to this Commission and when doing so was threatened with the sack, would you call that victimization ?—I do not know of any.

K-4070. Take another case of a man in the crew system at Howrah. He was punished for a supposed offence he had committed. He appealed to his immediate officer and received no redress from his immediate superior, the Assistant Superintendent of Crews. He then asked for an appeal to be submitted to the Divisional Superintendent ; this was refused. He then asked for an interview—refused. In despair he wrote direct to his Divisional Superintendent, Howrah, and instead of an enquiry being instituted he received a reply as follows : “ Reference your statement of 5th December 1929. I am not satisfied with your work. If I receive any more complaints against you your services will be dispensed with.” Is that proper treatment to give your subordinates ?—Is this not victimization ?—It seems to have been only fair to have warned him that if he gave any further trouble in his work he would be dismissed.

K-4071. *Major Wagstaff* : How long has the divisional organization been in force on the East Indian Railway ?—It began in 1925.

K-4072. Was the old Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway divisionalized when you took it over ?—It was not actually completed ; it was in the transition stage.

K-4073. It was just changing from district organization to divisional organization when you took it over ?—Yes, I think so.

K-4074. What year was it ?—I think in July 1925.

K-4075. Is it a very complicated affair—changing from one organization to another ?—Yes, it is. There is a lot of complicated rearrangement of staff and offices.

K-4076. Do you think that the exception taken by the unions to the divisional organization is due to the fact that it has not been going very long and is not fully developed, coupled with the fact that you have just taken over another railway, or is it due to any inherent weakness in the divisional system as far as the administration of personnel matters is concerned ?—I think it is the first cause more than the second.

K-4077. You think it is possible their objections will diminish as the organization gets going ?—Yes.

K-4078. Part of that organization involves a Personnel Branch consisting of Staff Superintendents for each division who deal with personnel matters ?—Yes.

K-4079. And the Staff Superintendent is in the position of a specialist with regard to the various rules and statutory regulations which have been made and which are increasing in complexity, as opposed to the old district days when every executive officer interpreted these various rules

and regulations such as they were in his own way. Do you think that the present arrangement is an improvement as far as organization is concerned?—Yes.

K-4080. Would you favour recruiting the Staff Superintendents from the technical executive officers and starting a separate cadre for them, or simply take on men from outside?—I think a man who has been on the railways understands matters better than a man from outside.

K-4081. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Could you not recruit an officer from Home who has been accustomed to this kind of work there?—We might, but in that event we would probably use such a man as a specialist at headquarters.

K-4082. *Major Wagstaff* : With regard to the proposal of putting the staff at Lillooah on monthly rated pay, I understand that they have been given the option of either joining the new scheme or continuing as daily rated staff. I think you said that none of them had joined the new scheme?—Seven people first accepted the new scheme and then they thought better of it. They appealed to the Welfare Committee for the revision of the terms of the offer. The matter is with the Railway Board who are getting down new rules for all State railways. I have reminded the Railway Board to let me have the rules as soon as possible. They have authorized me to tell the men that I would give an answer before the end of the month.

K-4083. Do they object to the monthly rated system *per se* or to the terms of the offer?—They want the monthly rated system but do not think that the terms are sufficiently generous.

K-4084. *Mr. Cliff* : Has it been stated that they want the privileges attaching to a monthly rated system and not simply to be paid monthly without any of the privileges attaching to it?—They want to go on monthly rated system because of the privileges which are attached to the monthly rated staff.

K-4085. With regard to the welfare committees, you have said in your memorandum that a certain number of members are nominated and a certain number elected. Would you have any great objection to extending the number of those who are elected as has been found possible in other committees. It rather looks as if there is a large percentage of official nominees. Would you have any objection to ultimately having them wholly elected with no officials at all?—So far as the reduction in the number of nominated members is concerned I am a little doubtful if any big reduction will be possible. But I can say this that among the nominees there will probably be no officers at all in course of time; they will all be subordinates. But there should be one officer as chairman and one or two other officers to answer questions. It would be very useful if there was one officer to give whatever information was required by the Committee.

K-4086. With regard to the organization of the sanitary staff we were told that it was under the engineering department. On the face of it it does seem funny that it should be under that department; yet it is under the engineering department on some other railways also. Probably there is reason for this?—I cannot answer off-hand. It is a matter we have to

go into. The engineering department has a big supervising staff but the medical department had only one officer in each district.

K-4087. *Col. Russell* : Do you not think it would be far better to have a public health staff with medical officers with public health training than having your sanitary staff ?—It would be a good arrangement provided funds are available.

K-4088. *Major Wagstaff* : It is apparently a question of supervision. The engineers outnumber the doctors and could do things through their supervisors in a way which the doctors could not ?—Yes.

K-4089. From the Memorandum of the Railway Board I see that you contemplate spending a larger sum of money on quarters during the next two years than any other railway ?—Yes. During the last 4 years we spent Rs. 81,00,000 on quarters. We contemplate spending Rs. 59,00,000 for the next two years.

K-4090. Does that include any large single scheme or is it spread over the whole Railway ?—It is spread over the whole system. We have estimated for an expenditure of Rs. 14,50,000 next year.

K-4091. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is it for the workshops alone ?—No, it is spread over the whole system.

K-4092. *Major Wagstaff* : When you took over the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway were they worse off for quarters than the East Indian Railway ? Was there any appreciable difference ?—On the whole they were not very good. Part of this programme is rebuilding of those quarters which do not give sufficient accommodation.

K-4093. In your memorandum dealing with co-operative credit societies at Jamalpur and Lillooah workshops you say they "grant loans to employees who are members of the Provident Fund". That at present covers only those who are drawing more than Rs. 30 ?—No It is optional between Rs. 15 to 20 and it is compulsory after Rs. 20.

K-4094. *Sir Alexander Murray* : If a man wants a loan he can join the Provident Fund.

K-4095. *Major Wagstaff* : Can he get a loan the day after he has joined the Provident Fund ?—That is not under my control.

K-4096. On the East Indian Railway more are brought within the purview of the Fund than on some other railways. Even then a great number of the lower grade staff are without those privileges. They are just as heavily in debt as other people ?—I realise it is a weakness of our loan fund that no staff under Rs. 15 or 20 can have the benefit of it. We shall try and remedy that.

K-4097. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Mr. Colvin, what is your idea of the fundamental principle of a trade union ?—It is an association of the staff joined together to help themselves.

K-4098. Association meaning free association, I take it ?—Yes, free association.

K-4099. In what particular does a welfare committee differ from a trade union ?—The welfare committee works directly with the officers of the railways.

K-4100. May I put it like this that the fundamental difference between the two is that in one case there is freedom of association but on the other case there is no freedom of association ?—I do not know. The welfare committees are partly elected bodies. Under the new rules we propose to increase the number of elected members on the committee.

K-4101. Why have the new rules not come into force ? Why have they not been incorporated in this memorandum ?—The constitution has not been settled yet.

K-4102. All that you intend to do in regard to the constitution is to increase the number of elected members ?—Yes, increase it very largely.

K-4103. Nevertheless there will be a body of men on it who are not elected by the workers themselves ?—I am not sure. The committee may consist of employees alone except the chairman who will be an officer of the Railway.

K-4104. You will have then a welfare committee of which although you are not sure that all the members will be elected members, they will be governed by rules laid down by you ?—They can discuss any subjects they like.

K-4105. But you make rules like this : the eight representatives of the staff will consist of the following : two Europeans or Anglo-Indians, two of the Indian clerical staff, two of the lower subordinate Indian staff drawing Rs. 20 a month, and two of the lower subordinate Indian staff drawing less than Rs. 20 a month ?—The staff can elect whom they like but some body had to get out the rules first.

K-4106. The difference between a trade union and a welfare committee is this : a trade union is quite competent to make its own rules and appoint its own officers as it chooses, but in the welfare committee there is the official hand ?—Official hand only up to a point.

K-4107. Even according to the new system the men elected to the welfare committees will not be plenipotentiaries ; they will be mere assessors ?—They may make any recommendation they like.

K-4108. As regards conditions of work and wages they will merely put forward their recommendation in the shape of a petition which will be forwarded to the higher authorities ?—In the form of a minute of the meeting held.

K-4109. That is exactly what you have in the shape of a recommendation :

“ After discussion the Committee agreed that the following entry should be made in the Minutes :—

Nature of request.....

Reasons given for request ..... ”.

That is why I used the word petition. The nature of the request and the reasons given for the request will be forwarded to the higher authorities.—Under our latest rules all that we have provided is that the Committee may discuss what they like and make recommendations.

K-4110. Have you any objection dealing with the unions that exist and the new unions that may come into being to adopt a system of making



them represent their grievances to you ?—For the reasons I gave in the statement I handed in this morning I prefer to work on welfare committees for the time being.

K-4111. The main reason is that you fear communism ?—I fear that the unions may be captured by communists or other political parties.

K-4112. So long as they are not communists have you any difficulty to deal with them ?—What guarantee is there that they will not be captured by communists just as it happened in Nagpur ? You yourself had to secede from that body.

K-4113. There is no more guarantee than I have that you yourself might become a communist ?—Having built up an organization on sound lines there is the fear that it might be captured by the communists to the great detriment of the work-people.

K-4114. Is there any objection on your part to dealing with a union which is not a communist union and refusing to deal with it when it becomes a communist union ?—I do deal with unions now.

K-4115. What objection have you to allow the union to elect its men to the welfare committee ?—There is nothing to stop any union from getting its men on the welfare committee.

K-4116. But why do you put any restrictions ?—The men must be members of our staff and must have had one or two years service.

K-4117. If you are going to have men on the welfare committees all elected and none nominated why should you not go a step further and allow the union to elect whomsoever they choose without any restrictions laid upon them ?—We place no other restrictions except that they should be members of our staff and should have had one or two years service.

K-4118. I take it you are not going to have proportions ?—We have proportions as we are dealing with various classes and interests.

K-4119. If you accept the principle that there should be elected members on these committees why should you not go a step further and allow them to elect whomsoever they choose provided they are members of your staff and have had two years service ? Why should you not allow them to have their election according to their own rules ?—Each big class should have a representative on the committee. There might be a risk that you would have only Hindus coming out of such an election.

K-4120. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Just as in the Assembly and the Council of State you want to give protection to minorities ?—Not necessarily minorities, but the lower paid staff and the menials should have their representatives on the committee. I want them to come in.

K-4121. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : May I take it that when you are doing this you are acting in a benevolent manner towards the workers ?—I want a contented staff. The officers want to keep in touch with the staff.

K-4122. If instead of creating contentment the system of official unions called welfare committees create discontent ?—We have had them for more than 6 years and they have not created discontent.

K-4123. Look at the record of strikes on your Railway which is more than on other railways ?—During the last 6 years we have had one strike in Lillooah ; which was purely of a sectional nature.

K-4124. The Railway Board says that you have had nine strikes. Look at the question of discontent that prevails on the system. Take the question of corruption. Have you seen the memorandum submitted by the East Indian Railway Labour Union, Lillooah ?—No.

K-4125. Dealing with recruitment they say :

“ Frequently, men are employed by the supervising staff without scrutinising previous records of service or trying their efficiency whether skilled or unskilled. The general opinion is that the jobs are sold to the highest bidder ; qualified men and the relations of the employees are kept out. Specially this practice is rampant in Lillooah workshop. This has been brought to the notice of the authorities by the weekly official organ of the Union “ Mazdoor ”, thus resulting in the dismissal of the Foreman of ‘ H ’ Shop Mr. Wilkinson and Mechanics Mr. Feron and Mr. Ghosal, 2 mistris and a shop clerk. But in case of ‘ M ’ shop as some of the officials were entangled, the case was postponed. Definite allegations were made by the workmen of ‘ M ’ shop through the official organ of the Union against the names of ..... Only Bali Ram has been dismissed and Ashu has been forced to retire and the case is still pending.”

Do you think that this is a healthy state of affairs ?—That relates to the period before the Employment Officer was appointed.

K-4126 Has this particular case been dealt with ?—(*Mr. Badhwar*) : The case is not yet complete on account of the strike. Two of the enquiring officers who were present before the strike broke out were subsequently not available. One of them died and the other went on long leave. Many of the witnesses whose evidence was taken were not available also. There was a break of four months in the enquiry at the conclusion of the strike. After the workers resumed work the case was not taken up.

K-4127. Was any attempt made after the workers resumed work to investigate the question and see whether evidence was or was not available ?—The case was dropped.

K-4128. In spite of the fact that no attempt was made to find out whether evidence was or was not available ?—I cannot tell you exactly.

K-4129. Mr. Colvin, it is a very serious charge that has been made — (*Mr. Colvin*) : I think it should be communicated to me in writing. I cannot answer off-hand across the table.

K-4130. Have you not created an impression amongst the workers that serious cases of corruption of this kind brought to the notice of the authorities by the union are not looked into ?—I do not think that impression has been created. You said that in one case a man was dismissed.

K-4131. In one case a man was dismissed. In the second case what has happened ?—I cannot tell you about the second case without knowing the facts.

K-4132. As Agent of the East Indian Railway would you admit that it is your responsibility when a serious charge of this kind is made and an investigation set going you should complete the investigation ?—Was it made to me ? I do not know.

K-4133. If an enquiry was set up it must have been with your authority ?—No. A local enquiry may be set up by local officers or heads of departments. I cannot deal with every detail on the Railway.

K-4134. Is it possible that serious charges of corruption are made against the supervising staff who employ the workshop staff and the Agent does not hear of them ?—I may or may not. I have got senior officers whose business it is to bring these things to my notice.

K-4135. Take the case of victimization that Col. Gidney has mentioned. I will give you another case. After the 1928 strike 54 men who were alleged to have taken a leading part in that strike were discharged. Is that correct ?—Yes.

K-4136. Would matters of this kind not lead to more discontent if the impression was created that there were leaders of a union who because they were leaders were being victimized ?—There was no question of leaders of a union ; there were 54 members who were rioting. I have no knowledge whether they were all members of a union or not.

K-4137. Were these people charged with rioting ?—Their names were taken. They were not charged in the Police Court.

K-4138. Therefore your statement that they were rioting is not correct. I cannot possibly imagine any head of a railway department not prosecuting a case of that nature if it was a case of rioting ?—I can.

K-4139. I cannot imagine a railway officer discharging a man for rioting but not prosecuting him before the Police Court. I take it that this was not a case taken before the Police Court ?—No, it was not taken to the Police Court.

K-4041. Therefore your statement is an *ex parte* one ?—Yes.

K-4141. And they were dismissed for rioting ?—Yes.

K-4142. Was a charge sheet given to them ?—No, I do not think so. These rules were not in existence then.

K-4143. Were they ever informed why they were dismissed ?—(Mr. Evans) : The head of the department warned them particularly that if they rioted they would be dismissed. A notice was served on them in the proper manner and they were then discharged.

K-4144. Was a notice served on them ?—As far as I remember, yes.

K-4145. Take the case of racial discrimination. In reply to Col. Gidney you said, Mr. Colvin, that there was no racial discrimination on the railways ?—Not quite. I said that we made no racial discrimination as far as we could. I quoted also a case where there was still racial discrimination. I referred to education for instance.

K-4146. In principle there is no racial discrimination ?—No.

K-4147. Are vacancies in the F. class Asst. Station Masters, Deputy Controllers and Mail Drivers reserved for non-Indians ?—No.

K-4148. Could you give me a list of Indians who have filled these vacancies ?—I do not know of any one of them. As I said at the beginning there has been racial discrimination undoubtedly in the past, but the policy has changed. It takes time for new men to occupy these posts.

K-4149. The change in the policy was announced in the Legislative Assembly several years ago. What have you done since then to appoint Indians to these posts ?—If you write to me giving a list of the grades for which you want the figures I will let you have them.

K-4150. I am referring to F. class Assistant Station Masters, Deputy Controllers, and Mail Drivers. I have your statement that not a single Indian has been appointed to these posts ?—Do you count Anglo-Indians as Indians ?

K-4151. No, I mean Indians *versus* Europeans and Anglo-Indians.

K-4152. Take the case of an Indian who becomes an Assistant Station Master.—Is it a fact that he has to pass an examination in telegraphy, interlocking, signalling and so on ?—Yes.

K-4153. After passing these examinations is he appointed on a minimum pay of Rs. 40 a month with an annual increment of Rs. 3 a month ?—(Mr. Robertson) In the new grade he rises up to Rs. 55.

K-4154. Is it a fact that an Anglo-Indian after passing these examinations is posted at a bigger station and started on Rs. 260 a month ?—That is not correct.

K-4155. What does the Anglo-Indian get ?—An employee in grade I starts on Rs. 100 in the present co-ordinated scale and goes up to Rs. 200. After some time if there is a vacancy in the Assistant Station Masters' grade and if the man is considered satisfactory he starts again on Rs. 260 and in the co-ordinated scale finishes at Rs. 280.

K-4156. Can you give a single instance of an Indian who has got more than Rs. 40 starting pay ? Is it not a fact that an Anglo-Indian gets generally more than Rs. 40 and the Indian does not ?—(Mr. Colvin) : Undoubtedly he got that under the old conditions.

K-4157. How many Indians have you in grade I ?—(Mr. Robertson) : We have 9 out of a total of about 200.

K-4158. How many of them were recruited direct ?—Not one of them was recruited direct.

K-4159. How many Anglo-Indians and Europeans were recruited direct ?—They are all recruited direct. They are not all recruited direct as Assistant Station Masters. They are only recruited direct as grade I Guards.

K-4160. Mr. Chatterjee : Have you not got better types of houses with more accommodation for the European and Anglo-Indian employees than for Indian employees ?—(Mr. Colvin) : All employees in the same grade whether Indian or European occupy the same type of houses.

K-4161. There was differential treatment in this respect in the past ?—I have admitted several times that there has been differential treatment in the past.

K-4162. When you dispense with the services of men on the workshop staff on account of retrenchment do you keep a register of their names and addresses, so that you might call them again when you want them ?—We have an excess of staff everywhere. We have been in the unfortunate position of not wanting extra staff. If and when the time comes when we want more men preference will be given to men who were retrenched.

K-4163. Are you aware that charges of bribery and corruption are levelled against the subordinate officers who recruit the workshop staff ?—(Mr. Bhadwar) : It might be true of the old days, but since the appointment of Employment Officers there are no men in the workshops who recruit the workshop staff.

K-4164. What is the procedure now ?—All the recruiting is done by me personally. All the testing is done by me. I also fix the pay.

K-4165. You have a fine fund to which you credit the amounts realised from fines. You make contributions from that fund towards education, sports, institutes and so on ?—(Mr. Colvin) : Yes.

K-4166. Although the Indian staff is more numerous than the staff of other nationalities and thereby contribute more to the fine fund than the rest you are now giving much less to them than to other nationalities ?—Probably yes. The whole question is under examination. We intend to convert it into a welfare fund and distribute it to the different welfare committees to be spent as they think it advisable.

K-4167. Why not distribute the amounts in the proportion in which the fines are paid by the members of the different communities ?—The tendency is to give more to Indians than before. Under the proposed scheme of distributing the amount among the various welfare committees I have not the slightest doubt that most of it will go to Indians.

K-4168. Unless you fixed a proportion there would be no chance of the inequalities being removed ?—No, I do not think so.

K-4169. You have stated that the staff has the right of appealing to the District Officer, then to the Divisional Officer and finally to the Agent in some cases ?—The Railway Board issued some orders on this subject. I issued some supplementary rules to those rules but not in contradistinction to them. Here are the rules governing appeals. (Copy of rules handed in).

K-4170. The Agent of the E. B. Railway in answer to a question said that 99 per cent. of the appeals are not reversed. Have you any figures of the number of appeals reversed on your Railway ?—I am afraid we do not keep any figures.

K-4171. Under the new rules of the welfare committees even individual cases can be sent up by the divisional committees ?—Yes, they have now wider powers.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : There will now be a further court of appeal so far as the divisional committees can take up individual cases. The safeguards are much better than in the past.

K-4172. *Mr. Chatterjee* : When a serious accident occurs on the Railway, there is a joint enquiry to go into the cause of the accident and fix the responsibility. The usual practice at present is that officers go to the place and take the evidence of the men who are directly or indirectly concerned with the accident. Then a certain number of men are found guilty and are punished. But the men who are found guilty are never given the opportunity of knowing what evidence has been adduced against them and are never given a chance of cross-examining the witnesses ; they have not the help of some competent person to cross-examine the witnesses. In my opinion they are not given a fair chance ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : We do not always know until the enquiry has been going on for some time who is really the man to blame. (*Mr. Robertson*) : If a man is found to blame a statement is always taken from him.

K-4173. He is not shown the evidence on which he is found to blame and he is not even allowed to be present at the examination of the witnesses ?—In the case of a man whom the committee thinks on the evidence before them that he is to blame, he is allowed to hear all the evidence against him, and cross-examine witnesses if the evidence is such that it is likely to lead to his discharge.

K-4174. *Mr. Cliff* : What contribution does the railway administration make to the colliery benefit fund ?—(*Mr. Lancaster*) : The Railway does not make any contribution to the benefit fund ; it makes a small contribution to the pension fund.

K-4175. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You collect a pice per rupee from the workers ?—Yes, we also credit the fund with the unclaimed wages.

K-4176. Has any step been taken to increase the minimum wage on the Railway ?—(*Mr. Colvin*) : During the last few months we have been in communication with the Railway Board as regards the scale of pay of the low-paid staff. I understand that decisions regarding certain proposals are likely to be arrived at shortly. My powers to increase the pay of any particular staff are limited to Rs. 25,000 a year. Obviously any big scheme of that kind will require the sanction of the Railway Board.

K-4177. That was what the Railway Board told us. Have you any opinion as to whether that amount should be increased ?—It is advisable that the Railway Board should have control over certain expenditure. It is only a question of writing a letter to the Board.

K-4178. What is the minimum you are working up to ?—Generally speaking it is about Rs. 11. In certain areas it is more. I think it appears in the memorandum.

K-4179. *Mr. Cliff* : With regard to the application of the rule regarding the weekly rest day what has been done on the East Indian Railway ?—We have an officer on special duty to see what additional staff will be required to enable us to bring this convention into force and whether we cannot do it by re-rostering.

K-4180. Does it apply to running staff also ?—Not to the running staff, only to the station staff.

K-4181. What about the running staff?—I think it is under the consideration of the Railway Board. I have referred to it in my memorandum.

K-4182. With regard to the number of hours worked per week have any steps been taken to bring them within the 60 hours limit?—Under the Factories Act all our workmen in the workshops work up to that limit. As regards the rest of the staff I think there are probably not many cases where they work more than 60 hours a week. The difficulty is the work is intermittent in many cases. A man may be on call for 12 hours but he may not be doing 12 hours solid work. A special officer is enquiring into the matter.

K-4183. Can you give any indication as to when these recommendations regarding the weekly rest day and the weekly number of hours are likely to be in operation?—About weekly rest day it will take a little time to see what additional staff is required. It may be done within a year, I hope sooner if possible.

K-4184. We have been told by your union that some men are on call 7 days a week. Do they get any leave with pay in the year?—They get 15 days in a year.

K-4185. On the East Indian Railway there is no employee who cannot get 15 days leave with pay every year?—The workshop staff under one year of service do not get 15 days

K-4186. Is there a rule on your Railway that certain men cannot take leave if it means additional cost to the Railway?—That rule holds.

K-4187. *Col. Gidney* : Do those 15 days include holidays also?—There are no fixed holidays for running staff. Only the workshop staff have some fixed holidays.

K-4188. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : May I complete what I was saying? Mr. Colvin, did you consult any of the unions in regard to the various changes that are being contemplated in the leave rules, weekly rest day, promotions and discharges?—No, we have not consulted the union.

K-4189. Did you consult any of the welfare committees?—Do you refer to Washington and Geneva conventions? They are all fixed things. We are going to consult the welfare committees with regard to the running sheds.

K-4190. Have you consulted any of the welfare committees with regard to the new rules regarding promotions, leave, and so on?—Those rules are framed by the Railway Board. If a matter is before the Railway Board I should not be allowed to put it to any body.

K-4191. We were told in Delhi that there were blocks in promotions. Have you consulted the welfare committees with regard to that matter?—We have not consulted them

K-4192. Have you consulted any welfare committee with regard to the leave rules for new entrants on State railways?—The Railway Board have not consulted me about them and I have not been in a position to consult anybody else.

K-4193. Will you clear this point up ?—(*Handing a printed form*) I understand this man complains that he is not well and not able to go to his job. And he is given this M-form which says that he is well and quite fit ?—That is a form which a man gets when he is first employed on the Railway. Unless the form can be filled in satisfactorily he will not be employed.

K-4194. What is the reference to M. 4 there ?—I am not clear what it is. That has to be gone into.

K-4195. Would you make an enquiry into this and let me have your views on it ?— Yes.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

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Messrs. Santi Ram Mondal, Ram Autar, Atal Behary Santra, S. N. Shaw, Ismail, Ali Mohammad, K. D. Chatterjee, and Hardin Shaha, representing the East Indian Railway Labour Union, Lillooah.

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K-4196. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How many of you are working in the shops ?—(*Mr. Santi Ram Mondal*) : I am an ex-railway employee ; I was a Station Master ; I was discharged in 1926. (*Mr. Atal Behary Santra*) : I am a *mistri* working at Lillooah. (*Mr. Ram Autar*) I am a *mistri* at Lillooah. (*Mr. Ismail*) I am a painter at Lillooah ; I am still working. (*Mr. K. D. Chatterjee*) I worked in the Electrical Department as an electrical fitter at Lillooah.

K-4197. Who is now your President ?—(*Mr. Santi Ram Mondal*) : Shara Gurdit Singh.

K-4198. What is he ?—He is a *mistri* at Lillooah.

K-4199. Are you a registered Union ?—Yes, this month we have applied for registration.

K-4200. Have you a constitution ?—Yes.

K-4201. Will you supply us with a copy of the constitution and of your latest accounts ?—Yes.

K-4202. Are you members of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation ?—Yes.

K-4203. Were you at the Nagpur Congress in November ?—Our General Secretary, Mr. Mitra, went there.

K-4204. Is he still a member of the All-India Trade Union Congress ?—I think he seceded and came along with Mr. Chaman Lall.

K-4205. Where is Mr. Mitra now ?—He has left.

K-4206. Since when ?—Since November.

K-4207. Why ?—Because he did not like to work.

K-4208. Have you been recognized by the East Indian Railway ?—No.



K-4209. Have you applied for recognition ?—Several times.

K-4210. Have you corresponded with them about any troubles ?—Yes, we have sent several applications before the Employment Officers but we have had no reply.

K-4211. I have read your memorandum very carefully and I find that you disapprove of nearly everything that the Railway does.—Yes.

K-4212. With the exception of the Co-operative Credit Society.—Yes.

K-4213. You think that is a good thing ?—Yes, but it is most difficult for the workmen to get a loan in due time ; because all the shops have their representatives but at Lillooah we have no representative on the committee.

K-4214. *Mr. Cliff* : In regard to what you say under the heading " Relation between staff and rank and file ", in what way have you sought to present to the railway administration the claims which you spell out there ?—If a workman displeases his foreman or mechanic, the mechanic will write " I do not want this man " and his service is immediately terminated. If he appeals to the Agent, there is no remedy. That is the position at Lillooah.

K-4215. Have you put an appeal before the railway administration ?—Yes, several appeals

K-4216. Since when ?—Since 1927.

K-4217. Have you ever succeeded in getting a hearing from an officer of the administration in regard to an appeal ?—No ; recently I have only been successful in regard to one case in the block signal department.

K-4218. Did you go to the officer in charge of that department ?—Yes, and it had been decided by the Railway Board and not by the Agent and the officers.

K-4219. Apparently you were able to make representations to the officer of that department ; was a decision taken there ?—That department did not reply to our letters and we applied to the Railway Board.

K-4220. You mean you wrote to the officer of the block signal department.—Yes.

K-4221. And got no reply ?—No, nothing at all.

K-4222. Have you put in any application in regard to housing ?—Yes, several times ; since 1920 the workmen have been fighting for it. Several members of the Welfare Committee were disgusted and were compelled to resign from it.

K-4223. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Which of you are members of the Welfare Committee ?—Mr. Ram Autar and Atal Behary *mistri* were members of the Committee.

K-4224. Are they still members ?—No ; they were members when it was started, but they were disappointed because nothing was done and they resigned.

K-4225. When did you resign ?—(*Mr. Atal Behari*) : I resigned two months ago.

K-4226. How did you resign ?—I sent in my resignation.

K-4227. *Mr. Cliff* : Will you tell us in your own way your experience of the Welfare Committee ?—The object with which we joined the Committee could not be achieved. For the sake of our stomachs we went into the Welfare Committee.

K-4228. How long did you serve on the Committee ?—I attended the Welfare Committee six or seven times. About nine months ago I first joined it.

K-4229. Did you speak at the Welfare Committee ?—I did. We succeeded in putting an end to a little *zulam* (tyranny). On the question of the stomach we got no benefit.

K-4230. Does that mean that you were asking at this Committee for increased wages ?—Since 1920 we have been sending petitions but nothing has been done. We did raise the question of increase in the wages at the Welfare Committee.

K-4231. Was it easier on the Welfare Committee than by the old method of presenting petitions ?—Now it is a little easier.

K-4232. Where do you live ?—Bally ; quite near the workshop.

K-4233. What rent do you pay ?—I own my own house.

K-4234. While serving in the Committee did you raise the question of housing ?—Yes.

K-4235. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Who was in the chair ?—*Mr. Badhwar*, the establishment officer, was the chairman.

K-4236. *Mr. Cliff* : During the time you served on the Committee were you consulted with regard to the provision of houses ?—Recently we were asked.

K-4237. What were you asked ?—About 1½ months ago, we were given a plan and we were asked whether we agreed to it or not.

K-4238. What did you say ?—We replied “ unless and until you first settle the question of our higher wages we are not going to deal with any other matter.”

K-4239. The Union invites the Commission to visit the workshops to hear from individual workmen the extent of the oppression to which they are subjected. What kind of oppression is referred to ?—All kinds of oppression. (*Mr. Ram Autar*). When we complain to the officers they do not listen to us ; they say “ go to the Welfare Committee ”. Those who have no confidence in the Committee want to speak to the officers but the officers say “ we are not going to listen to you ”. When we get to the grade of Rs. 1-12-0 our increases are stopped at that ; we can get no further increase. If we present a petition in regard to an increase nothing more is heard of it. Since last April the matter in regard to monthly rate was raised in the Welfare Committee. The Agent told us , “ Go to

the Welfare Committee and I will send a *sahib* who will look into your grievances". When we got to the Welfare Committee we said " Since you have asked us to come and present our grievances to the Welfare Committee, please examine our grievances". The reply we got was : " We have sent your petition up to the Simla Railway Board. We cannot deal with your petition because we have no powers, nor has the Agent any powers. We have sent it up to the Railway Board at Simla ". This is in connexion with the monthly rate.

K-4240. Would you like to go to the Railway Board at Simla ?—We have already put in a petition to that effect.

K-4241. Did you write this document, this memorandum ?—(*Mr. Santi Ram Mondal*) : I wrote it.

K-4242. Did you write this paragraph about the oppression ?—Yes.

*Mr. Cliff* : You say " This Union invites the members of the Royal Commission to visit the workshop at Lillooah...and hear from individual workmen the extent of oppression they are subjected to."—(*Mr. Santi Ram Mondal handed in documents.*)

K-4243 *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is this the sort of thing you were thinking of ?—Yes, they were going to discharge some body and there was an appeal to the Agent.

K-4244. You have produced some petitions which were submitted to the establishment officer in 1928-29.—3 or 4 workmen are going to be discharged without any rhyme or reason.

K-4245. *Mr. Cliff* : You have handed in two documents ; one is an application for gratuity for a man who had been discharged from the service ; the other is an appeal from a man who had been dismissed for smoking inside the workshops and for calling other workmen to his assistance when some body was taking him along to the shop sergeant.—In the workshop there is a detective department to detect whether workmen are smoking in the latrine or are speaking to one another For this purpose a staff of not less than 35 is maintained to watch the workmen. Secondly, with regard to promotion, the senior and most capable men, who can challenge older mechanics and others, are not promoted but those who are members of the Welfare Committee and are creating a disturbance are promoted : those who are carrying on propaganda against the Union are promoted. The case of Ganesh was published in the papers ; he is a member of the Welfare Committee ; he started propaganda against the Union and he has been promoted.

K-4246. Do you mean that it is oppression to discharge men without giving them the right of appeal ?—They ought to take evidence as to whether a man is actually guilty or not and a sufficient chance should be given to a man to clear his position ; but nothing of the sort is done ; as soon as the mechanic or *mistri* says a man has a bad character or anything of that sort he is immediately dismissed.

K-4247. With reference to what you say in regard to medical facilities, can you tell the Commission about any cases of charging fees ?—(*Mr. Ismail*) : I live in Howrah and go by train. When people are too ill they

cannot go to the doctor. We are small people and go to the small doctor and take medicines and get better. Then when we go to the gate we are not allowed in ; we are told " Go to the doctor and get a certificate and then you can go in ". They say that the doctor who gives the certificate must be a registered doctor. Then we go to a registered doctor, pay Rs 2 or Rs. 3 and get a certificate from him. Then the Lillooah doctor countersigns it and then we are allowed to go in. We do not give any money to doctors of the railway administration.

K-4248. Is there any man in the room who has had to give fee to a railway doctor ?—(*Mr. Ram Autar*) : I have paid money to the railway doctor.

K-4249. When ?—My house is 10 minutes' walk from the railway workshop. When we fall ill and are unable to go to the doctor, the doctor is called in by us and we pay Rs. 2 as his fee. Rs 2 is his regular charge and if he gives an injection, etc., there is an extra charge. This is for me and my family and for all those who are living round about.

K-4250. When were you ill last ?—Just a little before December my brother was ill. For a year I have not been ill but before that I was ill and I myself paid the fee of Rs. 2.

K-4251. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is the name of the doctor ?—The doctor's name is Kundo and there is a doctor Gowsain.

K-4252. Did you get any medicine for the Rs. 2 ?—No, we got the medicine from the hospital ; it was not the compounder, it was the doctor.

K-4253. *Mr. Cliff* : When you wrote this about doctors getting fees, on what evidence did you base the statement ?—(*Mr. Santi Ram Mondal*) : There is one hospital of the Howrah Loco Depot. Workmen are living within ten minutes' reach ; they will not get any benefit from that hospital although they are railway workshop men. They are living at Howrah and Trikipura, that is one hospital. There are two doctors, an Assistant Surgeon and a Sub-Assistant Surgeon. If the man at Trikipura and Howrah got ill they will not get any medicine from these hospitals ; they have to go to Lillooah even though they may die.

K-4254. It is said that if the railway doctor attends a man he must pay fee.—Yes.

K-4255. On what evidence did you base that statement ?—Those are the subordinate railway employees living in rent free quarters ; they are treated freely.

K-4256. Have you had complaints from the workshop employees that they have been called upon to pay fees ?—Yes.

K-4257. This Commission cannot get out to the workshop but can you get statements from men giving the names of the men and doctors ?—Yes, I will get thousands.

K-4258. Can you get the date when the man was ill, the name of the man, what he paid and whom he paid ?—Yes.

K-4259. Will you send that to the Secretaries to the Commission ?—Yes.

K-4260. Do any of you work-people know that under the new rules men with ten years' service have a right to a charge sheet if they are dismissed ?--None of us know of this new rule.

K-4261. Do the men themselves want a committee of the Union to meet the railway officials and discuss their grievances with them ?—(*Mr. Ram Autar*) : That is what we want.

K-4262. Would you like to have a committee composed of the men working in the shop assisted by one Trade Union officer in order that your grievances may be discussed and be the subject of negotiation and settlement ?--Yes.

K-4263. If you had a committee, whom would you elect to serve on the committee ?—It would be decided by voting. We would call a general meeting.

K-4264. If there were two points of view, would you take a vote and abide by that ?—Yes, we decide by vote.

K-4265. Of the men who work in the shop, will those who want to send their children to school stand up ?—(A number of men stood up).

K-4266. How many of you send your children to school ?—(Three men stood up).

*Diwan Chaman Lall* : The others say that their children are in the villages.

(A workman) : My boy works in the workshop and goes to school for two hours.

K-4267. *Mr. Cliff* : What do you pay for them ?—If I had the money to pay, I should not have allowed my son to work in the workshop. I pay nothing for the school.

K-4268. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How many hours do you work in the workshop ?—42½ hours a week.

K-4269. Why do you not work longer ?—The climate is very bad.

K-4270. Are you paid by piece-rate ?—No.

K-4271. Would you like to be paid by piece-rate ?—We like the monthly rate.

K-4272. But if you were paid by piece-rate, you would have bigger pay if you do more work.—We cannot work longer hours because our health is not good and the climate is not good.

K-4273. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : What is the membership of the Union ? —(*Mr. Santi Ram Mondal*) : We collect Rs. 11,000 or Rs. 12,000 a year. We collect one day's pay in the year as the subscription for the year. We have got a balance in the bank of Rs. 2,500. (*Mr. Ram Autar*) : One of the reasons why we wanted you to come and see the conditions for yourself at the workshop is that when a man's hand or leg gets injured there are no doctors who give any decent treatment. When the man is taken to the operating theatre the mattress on which he is placed curves in and it is very inconvenient for him. We want a spring cot for that purpose. There are these and other difficulties.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## (RAILWAYS)

Seventieth Meeting.

(PANEL NO. 1).

CALCUTTA.

Thursday, 6th February 1930.

PRESENT :

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E., (*Presiding*).

Mr. G. D. BIRLA, M.L.A.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Diwan CHAMAN LALL, M.L.A.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S., (*Medical Assessor*).

Major H. W. WAGSTAFF, M.C., R.E

Lt.-Col. H. A. J. GIDNEY, M.L.A.

Mr. J. K. CHATTERJEE.

Mr. A. DIBDIN, *Joint Secretary*.} *Assistant Commissioners.*

Mr. V. E. D. JARRAD, Agent ; Dr. MOZUMDAR, (*Medical Department*) ; Mr. BAZAZ, (*Engineering Construction*) ; Mr. CHAKRA-BARTTY, (*Engineering Open Line*) ; Mr. KHANNA, (*Commercial Department*) ; Mr. FAROQUE, (*Transportation Department*) ; Mr. CHOWDHURY, (*President, Bengal Nagpur Railway, Urban Bank*) ; Dr. A. MARTIN-LEAKE, V.C., F.R.C.S., representing the Bengal Nagpur Railway.

K-4274. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is your experience ?—(*Mr. Jarrad*) : I have had 27 years' experience of railway work in India having been all that time with the Bengal Nagpur Railway. I have been Agent just under a year, previous to which I was Transportation Manager. (*Dr. Mozumdar*) : I have been 25 years on the Bengal Nagpur Railway. (*Mr. Bazaz*) : I have been over 11 years on the Bengal Nagpur Railway ; previous to that I was three years in the United Kingdom on the Caledonian Railway. (*Mr. Chakrabartty*) : I have just completed 27 years on the Bengal Nagpur Railway. (*Mr. Khanna*) : My railway experience is 11 years which has been on the Bengal Nagpur Railway. (*Mr. Faroque*) : I have just over 8 years experience, all of which has been on the Bengal Nagpur Railway. (*Mr. Chowdhury*) : I have been 23 years on the Bengal Nagpur Railway.

K-4275. The Bengal Nagpur Railway is over 3,000 miles long ?—(*Mr. Jarrad*) : Yes.

K-4276. How many workers do you employ ?—73,733.

K-4277. How many of these workers are earning less than Rs. 30 a month ?—I have not that information, but I can supply it. The staff drawing Rs. 50 and under, not including the workshop and clerical staff in the offices, works out at 36,118.

K-4278. Will you send us in a note showing how many are drawing less than Rs. 30 and how many are drawing less than Rs. 20 ?—Yes.

K-4279. You come under the category of a State-owned railway under Company management ?—Yes.

K-4280. You are still organized on the old departmental basis, and you are not organized on the divisional basis ?—No.

K-4281. Under your system the workers have direct access to the District Officer concerned in the various departments ?—That is so.

K-4282. To whom does the right of appeal lie from a District Officer's decision ?—Every single workman on the Bengal Nagpur Railway has the right of appeal to the Agent.

K-4283. You do not come under the new rules which have been issued by the Government of India ?—No.

K-4284. Have you been consulted in the preparation of those rules regarding discharge and dismissal ?—No. They have been passed on to us as being the rules which the Government of India propose introducing on the State railways.

K-4285. They leave it to the Company-managed railways to adopt or not adopt them as they think fit ?—Yes.

K-4286. At Khargpur you have appointed a Personnel Officer ?—He is the Personnel Officer in the workshops ; he was first appointed in the beginning of 1928. The feeling in the workshops was that the works managers who were in charge of the various shops had not time to do their own work and also inquire into individual grievances, that they were doing the best they could but that they required an officer to assist them ; and so we appointed a Personnel Officer primarily to inquire into the individual grievances of the workmen.

K-4287. You supplied the information with regard to your Railway which is contained in the Railway Board's memorandum ?—Yes.

K-4288. It is only in Khargpur that you have such an officer ?—Yes, in the workshops.

K-4289. Does he deal with the other shops besides the Khargpur shop ?—No, he only deals with the Khargpur shop. The only other shop that we have is at Nagpur and that is a very small one ; the officer in charge there has time to deal with this work.

K-4290. When did you start your staff and welfare committees ?—In 1927.

K-4291. So that they were really in existence before the Personnel Officer came on the scene. How many of these district welfare committees have you ?—We have one on each district under the departmental system. We have 7 districts.

K-4292. Does each welfare committee consist of 6 members of the Indian subordinate staff representing the 4 main departments, and does each committee elect its own chairman ?—Yes.

K-4293. What happens to the minutes or resolutions that are passed at these meetings ?—The district welfare committee first goes into the case. They are practically all individual cases. They first send the minutes of the meeting with their recommendations to the District Officer concerned. If the District Officer concerned agrees with the recommendations of the committee he then advises them that he is changing the previous orders in order to carry out the recommendations of the committee ; but if not, it then goes to the District Board of Officers. The District Officer concerned is not on that committee.

K-4294. Is the officer concerned present at the discussion ?—He can be called up as a witness, but he is not on the Board as one of the officers dealing with the case.

K-4295. In actual practice is he present while the discussion is going on ?—No.

K-4296. When an appeal from his decision is under consideration he is not on the Board that considers it ?—He is not on the Board.

K-4297. *Mr. Cliff* : You use different titles with regard to these District Officers. Are they all of the same status ?—Yes.

K-4298. The man whose decision might be challenged and the people who have the right to challenge it are of the same status ?—Yes.

K-4299. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What happens after the District Board has dealt with it ?—The District Board decides the case.

K-4300. If the workman involved is not satisfied with the decision of the District Officer, of the district welfare committee and of the District Board, he still has a right of appeal to the Agent, has he ?—Yes.

K-4301. How many decisions of District Officers have been reversed by the Agent, the District Board or the district committee ?—During the last year the welfare committee brought up 28 cases and the District Officers concerned changed their orders in 27 cases on the recommendations of the welfare committee. One case went to the District Board of Officers and when the case was further explained by the District Board of Officers to the welfare committee, the committee agreed with the decision of the Board.

K-4302. Therefore in no case did the worker find it necessary to go beyond these committees and boards to the Agent ?—No.

K-4303. All your employees are really servants of the Company and not Government servants in the sense in which employees of State railways are ?—Yes.

K-4304. I take it that the form of agreement is different ?—Yes, it is.

K-4305. The Railway Board have said in their statement that they cannot initiate measures for the benefit of lower paid workers or otherwise on the Company-managed railways, that they can only make a recommendation and that it lies with the Agent and the Board of that Company to decide what shall be done ?—That is so.



K-4306. Have you had cases where the Railway Board have come between you and your workers or have influenced you in a particular way ?—I remember one memorable occasion. On that occasion the Government of India considered that they had committed themselves to a certain line of policy.

K-4307. And<sup>d</sup> the Company accepted that in that particular case ?—We did.

K-4308. But are there many cases on record where the Railway Board or the Government have recommended or suggested to you particular lines and you have refused to accede to what they have recommended ?—As a matter of fact in the majority of cases if the Government of India introduce, for instance, a revised scale of wages on State railways, the Company-managed railways must follow that example or there would be very serious discontent among the staff ; it would be the natural sequence for a Company-managed railway to follow the lead given by a State railway.

K-4309. An enquiry was instituted last year, or within recent times, by the Railway Board, with a view to improving the conditions of the lower paid servants on the State railways. Have you also instituted inquiries on the same lines ?—As a matter of fact we are continually reviewing the situation not only of the lower paid staff but of the staff generally.

K-4310. What are your views as to the possibility of standardization of wages ?—Personally I think it is possible and I further think it is the only way of satisfying the staff of a particular grade that they are receiving fair treatment. If, for instance, the Station Masters on a railway can point to the fact that Station Masters on other railways are drawing more pay, it is a very difficult thing to make them understand that from our point of view they are receiving fair treatment. If wages could be standardized, I think it would probably do away with a certain amount of discontent that arises.

K-4311. Taking Calcutta, to which the Bengal Nagpur Railway, the East Indian Railway and the Eastern Bengal Railway run, you think that an attempt ought to be made to classify the rates of these three lines so as to make them more or less standardized ?—Yes.

K-4312. I suppose you would have to arrange for local or climatic allowances ?—It would be necessary to standardize the wages and then to give allowances for particular reasons.

K-4313. Has this matter ever been brought up at the Conference of Agents which is held annually at Simla ?—I have only been Agent a year ; I do not remember it.

K-4314. Do you think it would be a proper matter for discussion by the Agents ?—Yes, I do.

K-4315. *Mr. Birla* : The main functions of the welfare committees appear to be with regard to the grievances of the workers ?—Yes.

K-4316. It is not concerned with any other questions of welfare, such as education, cinema shows, recreation, sanitation, and that sort of thing ?—The welfare committees have been told that they can send up any recommendations they care to in connection with the welfare of the staff, such

as matters of education, sanitation, and better conditions, but at the time I warned them that we had very little money and that it would be disappointing to have to be forwarding these cases for which we had no funds. It is purely a matter of money.

K-4317. So that up to this time nothing is being done in the direction of social welfare work ?—Very little has been done.

K-4318. The welfare committees have no funds at their disposal ?—No.

K-4319. They have no paid secretary or anything of that sort ?—No. The chairman is elected and they elect their own secretary for the meetings. The secretary is one of the workmen and he is not paid.

K-4320. What is your attitude to the trade unions ?—The Bengal Nagpur Railway was the first Railway in India to start a labour union.

K-4321. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Or to have a labour union started ?—Yes. It was started in the year 1921-22 ; a few working rules were framed. The Union was given every encouragement by the administration. I must say that the results were unfortunate. Then there was a strike in 1927. Quite a large number of the staff did not agree with the methods that had been adopted by the Labour Union and they formed another union which is now called the Bengal Nagpur Railway Employees Union.

K-4322. *Mr. Birla* : Are both the Unions registered ?—Yes.

K-4323. What is your attitude towards these Unions at present ?—I think distinctly sympathetic.

K-4324. Do you receive complaints through these Unions ?—Yes, and I deal with them.

K-4325. You do not refuse to deal with the Unions or to receive complaints from them ?—No, not by any means ; for instance, at Khargpur the representatives of the Labour Union have been in the habit of meeting the Superintendent of Workshops once a month to discuss Union matters.

K-4326. Have you considered the question of sickness insurance ?—I am afraid I have not.

K-4327. I suppose you agree with me that the ordinary worker cannot take advantage of the institutes of which you speak in your memorandum because reading, billiards, cards, and such things are not the recreations of an ordinary labourer. I suppose these institutes are intended for educated men. Have you considered the question of starting recreation for ordinary uneducated labourers ?—It is rather difficult on a railway ; the majority of our staff are at roadside stations at which there are nine or ten men of the class of labour to which you are referring ; it is a difficult thing to arrange games and recreation for such a small number.

K-4328. You might have cinema shows or something of the kind for your workers ?—Cinema shows are arranged ; we have a special car with the cinema show which travels to the large stations. It is travelling practically throughout the year.

K-4329. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Have you seen this statement with regard to the 1927 strike (handing a print to the witness) ? This is with regard to the Strike on the Bengal Nagpur Railway and its immediate

causes and was issued by the General Secretary of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union ?—I saw a vast number of press cuttings and possibly I did see this.

K-4330. It is stated in this printed document that a certain gentleman, Mr. Prag Datt, represented himself to the Police as being a spy of the authorities and requested them to find out the truth of it by reference to Mr. Tarachand ? Who was this gentleman Mr. Prag Datt ?—I am afraid I cannot remember.

K-4331. I may remind you that this was just before the assault on the strikers by the Auxiliary Force took place.

K-4332. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Do you know Mr. Prag Datt ?—No.

K-4333. Were you at Khargpur when this strike took place ?—No ; I went there later under instructions from the Agent to enquire into it.

K-4334. *Mr. Birla* : Do any of your officers know this man ?—I do not think there is anybody here who knows him.

K-4335. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Here was a charge made over the signature of Ram Chandra Rao, General Secretary of the Union, and it was printed and published. Was any enquiry made by the Agency into this allegation that Prag Datt was a spy and in the pay of the Agency ?—I am afraid I do not know.

K-4336. *Sir Alexander Murray* : So far as you know was he a spy in the pay of the Agency ?—No, most certainly not.

K-4337. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : The consequences of this were serious : there was a bayonet charge and men were shot as a result of provocation, according to the statement of the General Secretary. The Auxiliary Force were called in. This having been brought to your notice, was any enquiry instituted or a rejoinder issued in the Press denying this charge ?—I shall have to turn up the records and see ; I was not here at the time.

K-4338. I should be very glad if a statement could be sent in in regard to this particular matters as to (1) whether an enquiry was made and (2) whether the results of that enquiry were published. There is a second charge made here in regard to the attack on the strikers as well as the passengers by the Auxiliary Force led by Col. Anderson. Was Col. Anderson an employee of the Railway ?—Yes.

K-4339. And he was also head of the Auxiliary Force ?—No, he had nothing to do with the Auxiliary Force.

K-4340. Who called the Auxiliary Force in ?—The District Magistrate.

K-4341. And Col. Anderson helped the Auxiliary Force in the attack that was made ?—I do not know what he did.

K-4342. Who was in charge of the Auxiliary Force ?—It would be the senior Auxiliary Force officer present.

K-4343. Was he a railway employee ?—Yes.

K-4344. Was a judicial enquiry held into the shooting and the assaults ?—The whole case was in charge of the District Magistrate. As far as I remember there was no enquiry. The District Magistrate submitted his report to the Government of India.

K-4345. Were you supplied with a copy of that report of the District Magistrate to the Government of India ?—I must turn up the records and see.

K-4346. If you can find that report in your files perhaps we can have a copy of it ?—Yes, if it is not a confidential report.

K-4347. From what you say in your memorandum with regard to the lockout, I suppose you are referring to the interview which Mr. Joshi and I had with Sir George Rainy ?—That is so.

K-4348. Is it a fact that the Government of India approached you as the result of the first interview that we had and asked you to pay wages for the period of the lockout, but the Agency refused to do so ?—I am afraid if I am to make absolutely and entirely accurate statements I must call for my file papers. I was not Agent at that time.

K-4349. Is it within your knowledge that eventually the Government of India had to force the hands of the Agency ? Did the money come out of the Government of India or was the money paid out of the funds of the Agency ?—It was paid out of the funds of the Railway.

K-4350. There was no charge on the Government of India at all ?—As far as I am aware there was no charge to the Government of India.

K-4351. I take it the main union of your Railway is the Bengal Nagpur Labour Union ?—Yes.

K-4352. The Garden Reach Union was originally a branch of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Union and it is still really a branch ?—No ; the Bengal Nagpur Railway Employees Union have very serious differences of opinion with the Bengal Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union.

K-4353. It does not extend all over the line ?—It is a separate Union. It is not entirely restricted to Garden Reach ; it also has members all over the line.

K-4354. What is the membership of the Garden Reach Union and of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Labour Union ?—I have not seen the books recently and it is constantly changing. The number of members and the number who pay their subscriptions are two very different things. I cannot give you the information at present but I can get the information.

K-4355. What is the present state of your relationship with the main union, i.e., the Bengal Nagpur Railway Labour Union ?—Sympathetic.

K-4356. You remember there was a deputation led by the All-India Railwaymen's Federation which had an interview with Sir George Rainy ?—Yes.

K-4357. Certain matters were discussed between Sir George Rainy and this deputation ?—Yes.

K-4358. Have you received any intimation from the Railway Board as to what action the Railway Board intend taking in regard to the matters that were discussed at that interview ?—No.

K-4359. Have any of the leave rules been communicated to you by the Railway Board ?—No.

K-4360. I take it since the interview they have not consulted you in regard to matters that were raised at the interview?—Certain matters were discussed with the Agents when they met the Railway Board subsequently.

K-4361. What were the matters that were discussed with regard to the interview with the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, if I may ask that question?—I am afraid I cannot say if there were any definite points that were discussed in regard to the All-India Railwaymen's Federation or not.

K-4362. Was the service agreement discussed between the Railway Board and yourself?—No.

K-4363. Was the question of blocks in promotion discussed?—No.

K-4364. Revision of the leave rules?—No.

K-4365. Was the question of discharge raised?—I am afraid I have not the proceedings here.

K-4366. I have before me a verbatim report of the interview the deputation had with Sir George Rainy. Were matters of wages raised between you?—No.

K-4367. Allowances?—No.

K-4368. Wages boards, promotions, half days and holidays, quarters?—No.

K-4369. Free passes in regard to union matters?—Yes.

K-4370. What was the decision arrived at?—The proceedings were confidential.

*Diwan Chaman Lall* : Mr. Chairman, I take it we have the right to call for any confidential documents and papers that there may be.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : I suggest the proper people to approach in the matter are the Railway Board.

K-4371. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Was the question of victimization raised?—No.

K-4372. Then the Railway Board have not consulted the Agent or the Agents in regard to the majority of the matters that were raised in the deputation?—No.

K-4373. Will you throw some light on the case of Mr. Naidu, who was I believe Organizing Secretary of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Union?—At the time that he was informed that his services were no longer required by the Railway he was the Branch Secretary of the Indian Labour Union. To-day he is the Chief Vice-President of the Union.

K-4374. What was the reason for dispensing with his services?—The details of the case are not here, but he took a very leading part in the labour unrest at Khargpur.

K-4375. Would it not conduce to better feeling between the Union and the administration if the impression was removed that his services were dispensed with because of his having taken the leading part?—No, because at that time certain of the senior members of the Indian Labour Union strongly recommended that his transfer, at least from Khargpur, would be in the interests of public peace.

K-4376. Would you be prepared to reconsider that case ?—Personally, no.

K-4377. *Mr. Cliff* : When you speak of labour unrest, are you referring to March or September of that year ?—To both ; it refers to the strike, the lockout and communal riots in which a number of people were killed.

K-4378. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Do you think we could now revise the limit of 60 hours week, having had 10 years' experience, and get on to the basis of other-countries, namely, 48 hours ?—This is a matter which is under consideration with the Railway Board and I prefer to leave it there.

K-4379. I do not know that that matter is particularly under the consideration of the Railway Board ; in the draft Bill which they have presented to the Assembly the 60 hours limit remains. Have you been consulted with regard to a reduction of hours from 60 to 48 ?—No.

K-4380. What is your own opinion or the opinion of your Board with regard to a reduction from 60 to 48 hours ?—I want more time to consider this question.

K-4381. You could send us in a statement when you have considered it ?—Yes.

K-4382. With regard to the service agreement, do you think it is a fair proposition that a man should be discharged without being given a charge sheet, without being presented with the evidence against him and without being given an opportunity of contesting the credibility of that evidence ?—As I have said, each man has the right of appeal and in the event of an appeal he would be given every opportunity of stating his case.

K-4383. So that you would agree with me that it is a desirable thing that any man who may be discharged or dismissed should know all the facts upon which a case is being based against him and should be given an opportunity of contesting the evidence that is being brought against him ?—In principle, yes ; in practice, it would on occasions be extremely difficult to deal with those cases. I accept the principle.

K-4384. Would you recommend any better system of controlling the amount levied in the way of debits or fines ?—This is a matter which has received a good deal of thought and consideration and as I have stated we have tried to regulate it.

K-4385. Have you full powers yourself or have you to refer to the Home Board when you deal with any revision of wages ?—The case is referred to the Home Board for approval, but the recommendations of the Agent are invariably accepted.

K-4386. How far can the Government of India force measures upon you ; what is their authority and power and what is the authority and power of the Home Board ?—The Railway Board cannot force their authority in the matter of wages ; it is more a matter of suggestion.

K-4387. In spite of the fact that the Government of India provide 6 times the capital provided by the Company the Government of India are not in a position to force your hands in regard to increase in wages ?—These matters all come under our contract with the Secretary of State, and apparently the Secretary of State and the Government of India are satisfied with the terms of the contract.

K-4388. *Sir Alexander Murray* : We were told that as far as State railways are concerned, any Agent can spend in any one year up to Rs. 25,000 in adjusting the wages of a particular class ; does that affect you at all ?—No.

K-4389. *Mr. Cliff* : Can an Agent without the permission of his Board spend that money ?—The usual procedure is for the Agent to take action and then get the Board to sanction it.

K-4390. The Railway Board speaking of the power of the Agents say : “ Finally they are empowered to revise the pay of the subordinate staff, provided no such scheme costs over Rs. 25,000 a year ”. Do your powers exceed that ?—They are the same as on State railways.

K-4391. The Railway Board in their memorandum deal with the trouble which occurred in September 1927. I understand from your memorandum that the direct loss to the railways by wages paid was 4.79 lakhs ?—Yes.

K-4392. Did a similar loss take place in December and October ?—I am getting confused between the general strike and the workshop strike.

K-4393. In your memorandum you refer to the loss that was caused in the workshops. Did a similar loss take place owing to the trouble which commenced in September ?—Yes.

K-4394. The amount of wages which the Railway had to pay is given as being 4.79 lakhs. It says : “ This closure was not tantamount to a lock-out and the staff were paid for the full month from the 12th September to the 11th October ”. That figure is not included in the 4.79 lakhs ; is it ?—This includes the wages.

K-4395. Wages were paid for a period when the men were in the workshop but not working properly. In the memorandum of the Railway Board it is stated : “ In August 1927 the Agent announced his intention of reducing the labour force at Khargpur by this number. At the same time he offered special terms to workmen who were willing to resign, and these were accepted by about 300 men. The reduction was, however, resented by the workmen and on the 7th September when notices of discharge were issued they adopted a policy of passive resistance, attending the workshops but doing no work. The only payment that you record is from the 12th October, 1927—4.79 lakhs. What is the amount from the 7th September to the 12th October ? Perhaps you will supply us with that figure ?—Yes.

K-4396. It says “ the workshops were eventually re-opened on the 8th December, 1927, and men were given pay for the entire period the shops remained closed ”. Does not that appear to be a condition ? And then it goes on : “ As vague charges of victimization and unfair treatment had been made the Agent decided to depute an officer ”. Was that one of the reasons which led the men to resume work ?—Yes, it was.

K-4397. As one reads further on, were those the two results which followed this trouble and the enquiry ?—Yes. The recommendations that were made in connection with the offer of double the ordinary rate of gratuity and the extra gratuity at the rate of 50 per cent. for men selected for compulsory discharge were not made as a result of the investigation

at Khargpur ; it was the result of an investigation made by two officers selected by the Government of India who visited various railway workshops in India.

K-4398. Did the Agent when he was announcing his intention of reducing the labour force communicate officially with the Union ?—The Union was advised by the Agent.

K-4399. Were there any negotiations between the Agent and the Railway Union ?—No.

K-4400. Have you any idea as to why there were no negotiations ?—No.

K-4401. From this record of the trouble it appears to me that it is likely to lead the men to believe that the way of getting attention to a grievance is to have a stay-in strike and do no work. It does appear that the men as a result of creating trouble have got better terms than they were receiving. Do you not think the better way to deal with them would be to deal with the representative officials of the union rather than have a repetition of that trouble ?—If the union representatives with whom we were dealing were workshop men I would entirely agree with you ; but as the representatives are invariably clerks who have no knowledge of the workshops conditions I am afraid I cannot agree.

K-4402. First of all we have a record of a deputation which was received by Sir George Rainy and the Railway Board. He did not insist that the representatives of the Union must of necessity be working in a particular department or on a particular railway. I do not know whether you suggest that the Agents of railways should stand on a different footing from that on which the Railway Board stands ?—Not at all. At the present time we have an enquiry in process at Khargpur in connection with certain representations put forward by the men and we have two members of the Indian Railway Union on that enquiry. Up to the present I have only seen one of the interim reports. I see from it that the representatives of the Indian Labour Union say that the new machines which have been introduced in the shop are responsible for phthisis and consumption. They say that is their considered opinion. I suggest that is an opinion which would not be put forward by workman who was working the machines. It is irresponsible opinions of that type that cause the difficulty.

K-4403. The Railway Board when they are making an enquiry into this particular case have one railway officer with workshop experience and a non-railway officer of administrative experience with a knowledge of labour conditions. Is it your view that people working on your Railway are entitled to have the assistance of somebody who is more experienced in negotiation than they are, even though he may not be working on the Railway ?—Certainly.

K-4404. You refer to three Unions ; do you negotiate with all the three Unions ?—Actually there are two registered Unions, and there is also a body of employees which calls itself the Muslim Welfare Committee. This only consists of the majority of the Mussalmans on the Railway as they will not join the other two Unions.

K-4405. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : What is the membership of this Muslim Union ?—I should say approximately 1,200.



K-4406. *Mr. Cliff* : You mention three Unions ; do you negotiate with all the three ?—The union mentioned in my memorandum is not a labour union ; since I have been Agent I have had no representations from the third union.

K-4407. You just referred to another body. Do you negotiate with that body as well ?—It has only recently been formed and I have had no representations.

K-4408. Do you experience any practical difficulties in negotiating with the two Unions ?—Sometimes ; when both Unions claim to represent the same men and as a matter of fact quite recently the same man.

K-4409. In your memorandum you say “ in the very isolated instance in the loco workshops.... ”. Is this the enquiry we have just been discussing ?—Yes, the same one.

K-4410. You had to take disciplinary action against the supervising subordinate staff. Has that had a good effect upon the handling of labour at those loco workshops ?—Yes, it has.

K-4411. Again you give figures as to death gratuities paid ; can you divide those sums between superior and subordinate staff ?—The information can be supplied.

K-4412. Have you any approximate idea of the length of permanent service of the men employed at the unhealthy stations which you specify in your memorandum ?—I can supply you with that information. They are changed periodically ; at certain stations they only work for six months.

K-4413. We should like to know that men are not working at these unhealthy stations for more than a maximum period ?—They are not. Dongoapasi, where I give the figure of 230, at one time certainly was an unhealthy station, the disease being malaria, and we gave them there the usual allowance. Since then with the assistance of the malariologist the cases of malaria have been reduced practically to *nil*, and I suggested doing away with the allowance, but as the staff all threatened to go on strike I changed it to a jungle allowance and it remained. Dongoapasi is on the branch taking off near Tatanagar which brings the iron ore to the iron and steel works.

K-4414. I suppose you agree with me that health is more than money ?—Certainly.

K-4415. Is there any direction or arrangement for the transfer of a man who is very often ill ?—Yes. After a certain period the staff do change whether they are ill or fit, but if a doctor recommends an earlier transfer that transfer is immediately carried out.

K-4416. What is the period ?—Twelve months.

K-4417. Has the doctor any record of sickness on these stations ?—The information can be supplied.

K-4418. Are not officers representing the administration appointed to the district welfare committees ?—No.

K-4419. Do the members sit by themselves ?—They do.

K-4420. And they elect their own chairman ?—Yes.

K-4421. In your memorandum it is said : " Before an employee can address the chairman of the district welfare committee, he must—

- (1) have complied with the orders against which he wishes to appeal;
- (2) have already appealed to his District Officer for reconsideration of the orders issued and received a reply "

Is that dealing with appeals ?—Yes. In a case of this kind if he is given an order he must carry it out.

K-4422. You say representations regarding general conditions of service are also accepted for discussion. I suppose these two conditions do not apply to that ?—No, these conditions will apply in the case of a transfer. If a man is transferred, he must carry out orders in the ordinary way.

K-4423. Is that with regard to the workshop ?—No, these are usually the staff in the district.

K-4424. If he receives an order, he must go ? How does he exercise his right of appeal ?—There are certain cases in which, in the interests of the working of the railway, it is necessary to move people at short notice. In those cases the man is supposed to carry out the orders first ; then, if he wishes to appeal, he can appeal to the District Officer ; and if he is not satisfied with the result, he appeals to the welfare committee.

K-4425. If he is transferred to some distance, has he a right to come in front of the committee ?—Yes.

K-4426. I am wondering how it works in practice ? If you transfer a man some distance away, can he travel that distance to come to the committee ?—Yes, he can either go before the committee of the district which he has left or he can go before the committee of the district to which he has been transferred ; he can do as he pleases.

K-4427. Do your district welfare committees cover all grades over a whole district ?—Yes.

K-4428. What is the area that a district committee covers ?—I should think about 300 miles.

K-4429. Do the six members of the committee who come from those four different sections travel long distances to attend the meetings of this committee ?—No, they are selected and they are comparatively near.

K-4430. What is the machinery which enables them to be effective ?—(*Mr. Faroque*) : Usually a man is taken from a big centre and one or two men from places far away on the line. When a man comes to the meeting and goes back to his headquarters, it gives him a chance of coming in contact with the staff on the line, while a man who has come from a big centre has the opportunity of keeping in touch with the employees in that place.

K-4431. How does a man, who comes from the transportation staff, cover the area ?—The transportation man would only deal with transportation cases.

K-4432. They come from certain grades, but I suppose their grades are disregarded when they are on the committee ; they are all merely

members of the committee ?—They represent all the employees in the different departments.

K-4433. Geographically, these six men are not scattered all over the area ; how do you cover the outlying portions ?—That is a matter which is taken into consideration when the District Officers are nominating their men. In my particular district the transportation man comes from Bilaspur which is a big centre, one engineering man comes from Nagpur, which is another big centre, while three or four commercial representatives come from near Katni, while another comes from a place near Gondia which is this side of Nagpur. In that way men who are at different stations have an opportunity of coming. As a rule we also appoint a man who belongs to the relieving staff who are moved about. Those are the men who have done the most useful work.

K-4434. It is suggested somewhere in this memorandum that where men are congregated in large centres there you have discontent and probably trouble. That appears to me to arise from the fact that men who gather in large numbers gain more courage. In what way are the ill-paid workers who are scattered over one of your large districts being represented and in what way are their thoughts, aspirations and longings put before your welfare committee ?—(*Mr. Jarrard*) : I think the opportunities they have would be through the members of the welfare committee who are actually working at these stations themselves. We have also selected members of the labour unions to serve on these welfare committees.

K-4435. How are the work and decisions of the committee made known to the whole of the staff ?—Through the members. but I have recently thought of issuing pamphlets in the vernacular on the subject.

K-4436. But how are you to communicate with the illiterate ?—In the past it has usually been our policy first to convince the literate staff ; they have passed it on to the other staff working under them. We have a definite arrangement by which the officers of the line visit each station at least once a quarter. I am referring to the really small stations, the road-side stations. It is their duty not only to go into the working arrangements but also to enquire into staff welfare matters and to see the staff.

K-4437. Does your experience lead you to recommend the extension of the employment bureau system ?—At the present time it is restricted to the workshops. Personally, I think it would be an advantage if we had a Personnel Officer principally to give assistance to the District Officers, if at times they require some body to help them with regard to particular cases.

K-4438. What is the status of the Personnel Officer on your Railway ?—He has the rank of a District Officer ; he works under the Chief Mechanical Engineer but he is placed at the disposal of the Works Manager in the shops.

K-4439. He is directly responsible to the Chief Mechanical Engineer ?—Yes.

K-4440. Would you recommend the general extension of the policy of keeping a register of employees who have been discharged ?—Yes. It is a good thing where a railway has reduced staff with a view to giving suitable men employment again as soon as possible.

K-4441. In the running staff have you men working more than 60 hours a week ?—(*Mr. Faroque*) : We have in certain cases Guards and Drivers who have to be on duty about 12 to 14 hours but those are very isolated cases. It only happens when we are very busy and when it occurs we try to bring it down to within 8 to 10 hours. The idea in working out train hours is to finish the journey of the train within 8 to 10 hours but sometimes the local conditions and traffic conditions cause difficulty.

K-4442. The Railway Board have stated that there are mail Drivers working as much as 65 hours a week. Have you men rostered to work as much as that ?—Not in the ordinary course, though there are exceptional conditions.

K-4443. In the roster at what duty hours do you aim with regard to mail Drivers ?—Eight to ten hours.

K-4444. Is that a seven days' week ?—Yes, it is seven days a week except when the engine is under wash-out or anything like that and then the Driver gets a day off.

K-4445. Are you rostering men from 7 to 8 hours seven days a week as a regular thing ?—It does not work out regularly like that, because when we are framing the time-table we also take into consideration the day that the Driver is off for wash-out. (*Mr. Jarrard*) : The mail and passenger trains are scheduled ; in the goods traffic owing to the fluctuation of traffic it is impossible to work out a schedule.

K-4446. I was looking at some of your schedules this morning ; taking a mail Driver running from the first to the ninth, on the 3rd day he begins at 0.49 minutes and he is taken off at 8.7 ; he resumes on that day at 23.15 until 8.26 on the morning of the fourth day. He resumes at 17.14 on that day until 2.42 on the morning of the fifth day. He resumes at 17.35 on the fifth day until 21.24 on that day. He resumes at 0.52 on the sixth day until 5.3, resuming duty again at 18.47 on the sixth day until 1.57 on the seventh. He goes on until 7.20. He resumes work at 20.13 of the seventh day until 6.41 on the eighth. At 14.30 of that day he is on an empty rake and he resumes duty at 15.36 until 17.20. On the ninth day he starts at 8.27 until 10.42 ; he takes a rake until 11.25, resuming again at 15.42 until 16.48. You see what the Railway Board says with regard to the G. I. P. Railway mail and passenger trains. What is your roster of local trans ?—I have not had any opportunity of going into the details of the schedule.

K-4447. From the point of view of public safety and of the men, do you not think the hours of work of running staffs ought to be reduced ?—When you are at Khargpur I should like you to see one or two of the men and ask them what they think of it.

K-4448. At the moment I am putting the question to you as Agent.—So far as the running staff are concerned, I have left that entirely to my technical adviser, the Chief Mechanical Engineer.

K-4449. In your memorandum you say " the extent of application of the Washington and Geneva Conventions has been dealt with in a separate communication to the Railway Board ". The Railway Board have sent special officers to certain railways ; is there any special officer dealing with your Railway ?—We have been going into the matter ourselves, so as to be prepared, as soon as the Bill has passed the Assembly.

K-4450. Have you reached definite conclusions ?—Yes.

K-4451. Could you favour us with a copy of them ?—Yes.

K-4452. Does the record of rates of wages given in your memorandum cover all of your employees ?—No. The Railway Board wrote to me as soon as it was known that the Royal Commission on Labour had been appointed and sent me a questionnaire. In connection with wages they gave instructions that I was only to deal with the lower paid staff, and so the figures I have prepared are simply in connection with the lower paid staff. Later when I received the questionnaire from this Commission, the Railway Board gave me instructions to transfer the information I had already given as far as possible to the questions that were asked in this revised questionnaire. It is for this reason that I have only given wages for the lower paid staff.

K-4453. You make a rough division between unskilled and semi-skilled ; what are the numbers of employees in these two categories ?—I have not it here, but I have a mass of information in my office and if there is any particular information that you would like to have from me, I would be pleased to give it to you.

K-4454. Would the figures shown in the first and second categories give us a representative view of the rates obtaining on your railway ?—Only of the lower paid staff.

K-4455. Does it apply to Guards and Drivers ?—No.

K-4456. Does it apply to Station Masters ?—No, nor the clerical staff. It will apply to gangmen and coolies but not to *mistris*. There are certain grades of carpenters and blacksmiths to whom it would apply.

K-4457. Are you in favour of the principle of sickness insurance ?—It is a matter I have not considered.

K-4458. *Colonel Russell* : You say “ the type of quarters for the Indian staff of all departments is according to the standard adopted on the railway ”. What is the standard ?—(The witness handed in diagrams.)

K-4459. What is the type of quarter provided for your lowest grade of workers ?—There is one room of 95 sq. feet and a verandah of 40 sq. feet.

K-4460. Are there any windows or ventilation openings ?—It is not given in the plan, but as a matter of fact there are two windows.

K-4461. Are these quarters built in long barrack lines or in small blocks ?—Small blocks.

K-4462. What size ?—Four in a block.

K-4463. You have not got any barrack lines ?—Not of this particular type of quarter. At Khargpur we have got the only type of this nature which was built 13 years ago and there is a scheme for giving each employee more accommodation. Forty units have been changed to give them more accommodation and we are going on with the scheme. That is the only station where they are in long barracks.

K-4464. In the old blocks, is any provision made for bathing and washing places ?—No.

K-4465. Are there latrines attached to lines or blocks ?—Not in the quarters but they are outside.

K-4466. What type of latrine do you adopt in your lines for your lowest grade workers ?—(*Dr. Leake*) : Mostly the septic tank pattern now ; some of the old ones are of the old bucket type but we are trying to convert them.

K-4467. Again you speak of “ the standard types of married quarters ”. What difference is there between these and the first that we have been talking about ?—(*Mr. Khanna*) : There is no married type of quarters except for Guards. Bachelor Guards live in bachelor quarters.

K-4468. This is for the superior grade of worker.—Yes. It does not apply to the menial staff.

K-4469. Is the Chief Medical Officer responsible for the health of the colliery area at Agada ?—(*Mr. Jarrad*) : It is under the East Indian Railway.

K-4470. The Agada colliery is under the B. N. Railway, is it not ?—We have a joint colliery with the East Indian Railway and apparently the East Indian Railway have a doctor who is solely devoted to the mining work ; he supervises the medical arrangements at Agada.

K-4471. So that you have nothing to do with it.—No.

K-4472. What is the medical staff of the Bengal Nagpur Railway ?—(*Dr. Leake*) : Four District Officers, 14 Assistant Surgeons and about 50 Sub-Assistant Surgeons, compounders and others. This is on the open line only.

K-4473. Are you of the opinion that four district medical officers are sufficient ?—We want more supervision ; it has been sufficient up to the present, but I think in the future more will be required.

K-4474. How many district hospitals have you ?—We have three district hospitals.

K-4475. I suppose those that are of no particular importance have no permanent nursing staff.—No permanent European nursing staff ; there are Indian nurses only.

K-4476. What kind of training have these Indian nurses ?—I think they have fairly good training ; most of them are trained at these midwifery hospitals.

K-4477. Would you be in favour of an extension of the number of nurses in your Indian hospitals ?—We have got a scheme put up for extension at Khargpur.

K-4478. I take it you have a large number of wives and children of Indian workers ?—Yes.

K-4479. They are entitled to free medical attendance.—Yes.

K-4480. The general complaint is that you cannot get these people to go to hospital. I put it to you that that is due to a deficiency in what might be called the female staff of the hospital ?—We have already nurses for the Indian hospital and I think women do make fair use of the hospital.

K-4481. Will you give us a statement showing the number of women admitted during 1929 as in-patients in your hospital ?—Certainly.

K-4482. Do you employ any trained *dais* or midwives in large centres ?  
—We have these trained nurses who are also trained in midwifery.

K-4483. But presumably they are not allowed to go outside the hospital ?—Yes. We keep them for that purpose.

K-4484. They do go to the lines.—Yes, when they are asked for.

K-4485. Can you tell us the number of cases they attended outside the hospital during 1929 ?—Yes.

K-4486. Have you any Sanitary Inspectors ?—Yes.

K-4487. Are they qualified ?—Yes. Most of them come from your province where you trained them and we have no complaints.

K-4488. What other health staff do you employ ?—We have the anti-malarial department.

K-4489. I see you have one malariologist.—Yes, and he has under him a fairly large staff of inspectors and so on.

K-4490. Do these inspectors do anti-malarial work up and down the line ?—Yes, under the advice of the malariologist.

K-4491. Is your staff doing anti-malarial work at Vizag. harbour ?—It has nothing to do with the medical department of the railway. The malariologist is lent for the Vizag. harbour, but that has nothing to do with the medical department of the Bengal Nagpur Railway.

K-4492. The staff employed under him are not railway staff ?—No. The railway, the Municipality and the harbour are working a scheme together and we are interested to that extent.

K-4493. Has the Municipality done anything ?—Very little ; so far they have obstructed.

K-4494. I think you have special men dealing with epidemic cholera.—Yes.

K-4495. How do you deal with cholera cases coming from Puri and spreading all through the district down to Madras and up to Bengal during the pilgrimages ?—We put on a special staff of Assistant Surgeons, hospital assistants and others and we have our special temporary hospitals at stations which suit the traffic department for taking the cases out of the trains and disinfecting the trains. If there are Government hospitals at these stations, we hand the cases over to the Government hospitals ; if not, we have our own places and we treat the cases ourselves.

K-4496. *Sir Alexander Murray* : That is additional staff over and above your normal staff.—Yes.

K-4497. *Col. Russell* : You had to arrange for these special cholera hospitals at large stations on these lines, because there were no other arrangements for dealing with these cases.—Exactly.

K-4498. I suppose the medical officers you have got have not sufficient time to devote to public health or preventive work.—Yes.

K-4499. Then would it not be advisable to have one or more medical officers specially trained in public health working in co-ordination and collaboration with the medical department doing nothing but preventive work ?—I think that organization should be taken over by the district medical officers but I think we should have another district.

K-4500. As far as I can see the district medical officer is always very much occupied in what might be called general practitioner work.—Yes.

K-4501. He has so many individual patients that he has not the time to devote to what might be called ' preventive work '.—Yes.

K-4502. Would it not be advisable to have in each district an officer trained in public health work to devote his whole time to this form of work ?—I do not think it is necessary. If the district officer had a smaller district, I take it he could then look after that work.

K-4503. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You do not like the idea of having two concurrent authorities—the medical officer and the D. P. H. authority ?—Yes. I know that was tried on one railway and I think it led to so much friction that they have altered this.

K-4504. *Col. Russell* : Might that not be due to the fact, as we found on another railway, that they were put under the district engineers ?—I understand this was put under the Chief Medical Officer, when the district officer could not get on with the special officer.

K-4505. Will you let us know how many Sanitary Inspectors you employ ?—Yes.

K-4506. You have only 4 district medical officers ; they are busy men and perhaps they are not able to inspect individual dispensaries so often as they might wish to.—Exactly.

K-4507. We have had complaints from employees of different railways that European medicines and treatment are ineffective ; have you any explanation as to why that should be a common complaint ?—I think you will find that all over the world ; patients like to complain of the treatment they are having and to go off and get some treatment which they know not of.

K-4508. Supposing a medical officer prescribes 10 grains of quinine 3 times a day, is it possible that the patient may get a bottle of medicine containing only one grain of quinine per dose ?—I have known that to happen in the biggest hospital in Calcutta.

K-4509. That is due to defective supervision.—Yes.

K-4510. So that with increased supervision that might be improved ?—I do not think you could get enough supervision to stop that sort of thing in this country.

K-4511. Do you accept medical certificates from outside general practitioners ?—We have to accept them.

K-4512. Provided they are registered medical practitioners.—Yes.

K-4513. What type of certificate do you accept ?—We accept them if the doctor's name and number are in the register or unless we can find



out something that leads us to suppose that the certificate is a forgery. We get a great many forgeries, but unfortunately we can only prove very few of them.

K-4514. *Mr. Cliff* : What happens to the person presenting a forged certificate ?—We refuse to sign the certificate and we make a note that we consider that it is a forgery ; then the medical officer will deal with it.

K-4515. Is disciplinary action taken in the case of employees of the Company presenting forged certificates ?—(*Mr. Jarrad*) : So far as I know, no.

K-4516. *Col. Russell* : If a man is away on leave outside the area of the railway and sends in a certificate saying that he is ill and requires an extension of leave, do you accept that certificate ?—(*Dr. Leake*) : We have to accept it if it is signed by a registered medical practitioner. An employee will take leave for one or two days to enable him to go out far enough from the railway and then he will send in a certificate saying he is sick and wants more leave.

K-4517. A complaint has been made that patients attending railway hospitals have to pay a tip of Rs. 2 for treatment and certificates. Does that occur on the Bengal Nagpur Railway ?—I think that is universal in this country and I have not the slightest doubt that it takes place on this railway. (*Dr. Mozumdar*) : Yes, it is so.

K-4518. *Col. Gidney* : When you accept medical certificates from private practitioners, do you insist on these certificates containing a statement that the patient is unable to leave his bed and appear before you ?—(*Dr. Leake*) : No.

K-4519. Would you accept the introduction of public health officers under your control as part of your staff ?—We already have a department which runs the sanitation of the railway but we do not call it a separate department. Our medical officers are supposed to be trained in sanitary work ; they hold degrees and diplomas of sanitation.

K-4520. Apart from that, is it not a fact that your district medical officers are engrossed in routine and administrative work ?—Yes.

K-4521. Then that must prevent them from paying due attention to public health and sanitation.—I think when they go round on their visits, they have time to look into sanitary matters ; it is all part of their work. I would sooner have more district officers who are trained in sanitation.

K-4522. Do cases arise in which when a district medical officer leaves his Headquarter Station to inspect his district, the medical care of the entire staff is in the hands of a Sub-Assistant Surgeon ?—No, an Assistant Surgeon. There are Assistant Surgeons at all important stations. If people are not satisfied with the Sub-Assistant Surgeon they have the power of calling in the Assistant Surgeon. If the Assistant Surgeon feels that he wants consultation, he calls in the medical officer.

K-4523. Is it a fact that you have no members of the Anglo-Indian community in your medical department ?—At the present time, no.

K-4524. Would you accept members of the Anglo-Indian community in that department ?—If they are suitably qualified.

K-4525. Do you advertise the posts ?—We do not advertise for any body.

K-4526. Is the Anglo-Indian community excluded from that employment ?—No, I do not wish to give that impression. I spend a great part of my time interviewing applicants. I never advertise and yet get hundreds of applicants.

K-4527. *Mr. Chatterjee* : An allegation has been made by the Anglo-Indian community that Indians receive appointments as upper subordinates by means of influence or favouritism. Is that so ?—(*Mr. Jarrad*) : No, the upper subordinates are selected according to their qualifications.

K-4528. It has been alleged also that, since you have started appointing Indians to these posts, you have reduced the pay.—I do not admit that so far as the Bengal Nagpur Railway is concerned ; I cannot answer for other railways.

K-4529. It has been alleged that appeals from subordinates are at times withheld by the immediate superior officer and any attempt on their part to come into direct contact with the higher official is met with censure from the officials who are thus blocking the road of appeal.—That is not correct on the Bengal Nagpur Railway. As I have said, every employee of the Bengal Nagpur Railway has the right of appeal to the Agent and no officer has the right to keep back an appeal even if it is on a small and trivial subject.

K-4530. When you provide housing for the staff, is the rent based on the capital cost ?—(*Mr. Bazaz*) : No.

K-4531. You make an allowance of Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 to members of the staff who have to live in places where the climate is exceptionally bad ; do you consider that is adequate ?—(*Mr. Jarrad*) : It is Rs. 2, Rs. 5 and Rs. 10 a month. In our memorandum, it is given as Rs. 2 and Rs. 5, but that is wrong. At most of the stations the amount of ill health is rapidly declining. In the month of September taking the railway as a whole the percentage of medical certificates to total staff which were granted on the Bengal Nagpur Railway was 5.99, while on the Eastern Bengal it was 9.97. I maintain that these stations are not so unhealthy as those in the similar class of the Eastern Bengal Railway.

K-4532. With regard to what you say as to instruction at the Telegraph Training School, I suppose these men are not appointed Station Masters or Assistant Station Masters until they are senior men or have worked in those positions for some years.—That is so.

K-4533. Do you insist on this rule when you appoint Anglo-Indians and Europeans ?—As a matter of fact no Anglo-Indians or Europeans go through the Telegraph Training School.

K-4534. You have Assistant Station Masters drawing from Rs. 280 to Rs. 400 who have generally been recruited from Guards ?—Yes.

K-4535. These men are not required to work practically as telegraphists, booking clerks, signallers and Assistant Station Masters.—No, they have not been required to.

K-4536. Where a man has to supervise the work of other men, do you not think he should be thoroughly acquainted with their duties and have

a practical experience of the work ?—Certainly ; they have to pass an examination in these duties.

K-4637. They pass a theoretical examination, but they never work in those capacities.—They are quite competent to supervise that work.

K-4538. They have never worked, for instance, as booking clerks.—I have never worked as a booking clerk, but I would be perfectly prepared to do it.

K-4539. You are already short of staff and if you introduce the Washington Convention, you will be still shorter.—The leave reserve for Station Masters, relieving Station Masters and Assistant Station Masters in the Nagpur District is 18 per cent. ; at other places it is 14.9, 17.8, 16.7, 19.6 and 17.2 per cent.

K-4540. But they are not kept specially for the leave reserve ; they are utilized when you require an additional man for any reason.—We appoint temporary men then ; this reserve is for the purposes of sickness and leave.

K-4541. Do your staff get their leave when they apply for it ?—They get their leave at all times except during the marriage season when a large part of the staff want to go on leave at the same time.

K-4542. Do you think your staff, especially the upper subordinates, get the leave which is due to them ?—I think, normally they do, but there are occasions when they cannot be spared. The leave is 14 days' casual leave, one month's privilege leave and 60 days' leave on half pay if they are sick during the year.

K-4543. If you gave effect to the Washington Convention, would you require a bigger leave reserve ?—Yes.

K-4544. The men complain that, instead of being fined, they are reduced in pay or grade and in that way are deprived of the benefit of the provident fund.—The only cases I know of are those in which men have been promoted to a grade for which they are subsequently found to be unsuitable and have been brought back again to their former grade. So far as I know that is never resorted to as a punishment. It is not a form of punishment which I myself would permit. We usually give warnings before we impose any form of punishment and then it depends on the type of mistake or error as to what form the punishment takes.

K-4545. Is there any racial bias with regard to the uses to which the fines fund is put ?—The money is distributed as equally as possible. Since I have been Agent, these matters have been dealt with by me and I have personally seen that the fines fund is distributed as fairly as possible.

K-4546. *Col. Gidney* : When this strike took place in 1927 at Khargpur, is it a fact that the Auxiliary Force did not shoot or bayonet any body ?—It is a fact that they did not shoot any body.

K-4547. Is it a fact that the police did it ?—It is so.

K-4548. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Is it a fact that bayonetting was resorted to by the auxiliary force ?—The auxiliary force, so far as I remember, certainly had their bayonets fixed.

K-4549. *Col. Gidney* : Is house rent as a rule fixed at 10 per cent. of the salary ?—Rent is based on floor area at different rates or 10 per cent. of salary, whichever is less.

K-4550. Does the Bengal Nagpur Railway subscribe to the policy of the Central Advisory Railway Committee of promoting 20 per cent. subordinates to officials ?—Yes.

K-4551. Does seniority play the major part in promotions ?—Seniority is certainly taken into consideration but it is not the final basis of promotion.

K-4552. If you had money, would you think it advisable to have a training school for Traffic, Loco., etc. ?—Yes.

K-4553. Are you prepared to reconsider the revision of your service agreements ?—I have had no complaints with regard to the present form.

K-4554. When a Chargeman or Assistant Foreman is covenanted from England, is he placed in a cadred service above all the locally trained men by virtue of his having a higher salary ?—If he was drawing a higher salary he would. This method has never been referred to me before for consideration and I would rather like to think the matter over before giving a definite answer.

K-4555. If the Washington and Geneva Conventions were rigidly applied to the railway, would your men suffer in regard to their emoluments ?—Certainly some of the staff would.

K-4556. If the Convention were to be introduced, would you consult your men on the matter ?—If it is decided that the Washington and Geneva Conventions must be applied, then I must apply them and I see no great advantage to be gained by consulting the staff. I think the staff would probably object.

K-4557. Would you approve of a system of commuting furlough as is done with regard to Europeans ?—I would rather think the matter over before giving a reply.

K-4558. Would you consider Rs. 30 or Rs. 35 a living wage for an Anglo-Indian to clothe himself, feed himself and be an effective member of the auxiliary force ?—It depends whether he is working as an apprentice and living with his people. I am afraid I have not gone into a family budget.

K-4559. When a Driver goes on leave, he gets in addition to his pay 75 per cent. of his substantive pay, but when a Guard goes on leave he gets in addition 75 per cent. of his overtime only.—No. A Driver going on privilege leave draws his full pay and also draws 75 per cent. of the average overtime drawn during the previous three months. The Guard is in the same position except that he gets mileage instead of overtime.

K-4560. Can a District Officer dismiss a man ?—Yes. He can only dismiss those who are drawing Rs. 200 and less. The dismissal of men drawing more than that goes to the head of the department.

K-4561. Are you prepared to consider the improvement of the rest houses and running rooms ?—I shall be very pleased to receive any complaints from the staff. I have only just returned from an inspection of the

railway, I have been into every running room at the stations I passed and I personally asked the men who were there if they had any complaints; they all said "No"; I did not get a single complaint.

K-4562. When employees go to draw their pay, do they sometimes find that there are so many deductions that nothing is left and they sign a "Nil" Pay Certificate?—I have never heard of such a case. (Mr. Khanna) : As a District Officer I have never known such a case. Sometimes a man's pay will work out at Rs. 200, while his deductions may be Rs. 80 to Rs. 90; I have not known of a case where no pay has been drawn. We hold back catering and other bills and advise the catering department not to supply him until the amount is recovered.

K-4563. When a man goes ill, let us say on the 20th of the month, he receives his pay for only 20 days in that month but the catering bill for that month is deducted in full and he is left with no pay to draw?—If the pay is stopped on the 20th, it is adjusted next month.

Col. Gidney : Say a man goes on a month's leave during this month, February, when he returns the next month, March, he gets nothing but his bare pay because his January overtime due to him is not paid in March. He receives it in April, March being a blank month, and he is driven to the money-lenders.

\* K-4564. Sir Alexander Murray : That is due to the fact that his overtime has to be calculated during the next month, is it not so?—Yes; he gets his overtime allowance in the third month after it has been earned. I have never had a complaint about this. I would certainly consider any change that you would care to put forward.

K-4565. Col. Gidney : Is it a fact that no Sunday allowances are given to certain of your staff?—The workshop people get all holidays and Sunday allowance, but the supervising staff are not given Sunday allowances or overtime; but Drivers and Guards get these allowances.

K-4566. You make certain educational grants to hill schools. Are you prepared to make similar grants to plains schools?—The whole question of the provision of facilities to schools is being considered by the Railway Board and I must wait to hear from them before committing myself.

K-4567. I understand that members of the workshop staff, who are doing duty in the *mofussil*, do not get Sundays, or any holidays, nor any overtime?—I will consider that. I have received no complaints.

K-4568. Major Wagstaff : How many appeals did you consider last year?—During last year I think I dealt with a dozen.

K-4569. Have you any officer in your own office who deals with personnel matters only?—No, he deals with personnel and also with other matters.

K-4570. Is there any proposal to extend the system of personnel specialists?—That is under consideration.

K-4571. How many of your lower grade staff cannot write their own vernacular?—From my experience I know there are a certain number of them; I should think it is about half and half.

K-4572. In the areas through which the lines run, would there be two or three vernaculars?—Yes.

K-4573. So that the question of keeping in touch with the lower grade staff is not merely a question of distributing vernacular pamphlets, etc. Half this class of staff must still be reached by word of mouth ?—Yes.

K-4574. Do you think the system of recruitment of workshop employees and running shed staff described in your memorandum is satisfactory ?—It is not decided on the recommendation of an individual Foreman but of a committee of Foremen.

K-4575. Do you think it is possible to reduce the time between the end of the month and when the wages are paid ?—I think it could be done at an additional cost.

K-4576. Do you propose that in future the whole of the members of your welfare committees should be elected or are you going to have a small minority of nominated members ?—The more I go into the matter the more difficult I see the question of election. The workshop is different from the open line ; these welfare committees apply only to the open line ; we have no welfare committee for the workshops.

K-4577. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : Could you get the co-operation of the Union in this matter ?—As a matter of fact, we have already nominated members of the Indian Labour Union to our welfare committee.

K-4578. *Major Wagstaff* : Are all employees eligible for membership of the co-operative credit society ?—Staff drawing Rs. 15 and more can join ; it is the same rule as in regard to the provident fund.

K-4579. Men drawing between Rs. 15 and Rs. 30 can subscribe to the provident fund if they like. How many such men have voluntarily subscribed ?—28 per cent. of the menial staff, or in round numbers, 6,500.

K-4580. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Will you send us particulars of the number of members, the total advances and so on of the co-operative credit society ?—Yes.

K-4581. *Major Wagstaff* : Can you suggest any means of relieving the indebtedness of the low paid staff, of people drawing Rs. 15 and less who cannot take loans from the loan fund on the security of their provident fund ?—(*Mr. Chowdhury*) : Provident fund is no security for loans taken from the co-operative society.

K-4582. Why is it then limited to people who are members of the provident fund ?—We have removed the restriction regarding membership of the provident fund. At present any one getting a pay of Rs. 15 and more can take a loan from the co-operative society.

K-4583. Do you take the security of two friends ?—Yes, we take the security of two or three friends.

K-4584. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Would you let us have a full description of your society, its rules brought up-to-date, the number of members, the number of people who have taken advances and so on ?—Yes.

K-4585. You have your Railway running through Indian States in some places ?—(*Mr. Jarrad*) : Yes.

K-4586. If an accident took place to some body on your Railway the Indian States would you claim protection on the ground that the Workmen's Compensation Act did not apply to an Indian State?—No.

K-4587. Have you had no cases of that nature?—No. I have had no cases to my knowledge.

K-4588. I put this question because we had an instance on another railway where payment was made *ex gratia* but not under the Workmen's Compensation Act. You never had any instance of this kind?—No.

K-4589. You always paid compensation?—Yes.

K-4590. On the question of indebtedness when a man who is in debt to some body else goes to you for a loan at cheaper rates of interest do you yourselves pay off the other debts of the man in order to save him from heavy interest charges?—(Mr. Chowdhury) : We pay him the money in full and leave it to him to pay his debts.

K-4591. Do you do that with regard to the menial staff also?—We do that with every body.

K-4592. We have found on some other railways that the co-operative society first of all tries to compound the man's debts outside the society so that the heavy interest charges might be saved for him. You have not made any attempt to do that?—No. (Mr. Jarrad) : We give the money to the man himself and expect him to pay his debts ; the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway pay the debts direct.

K-4593. They usually get it settled for half the amount, I understand?—Yes.

K-4594. I wonder whether you have ever thought of trying this?—No, we have never tried this.

K-4595. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : In your memorandum dealing with the right of the unions to represent individual grievances you say that " this is the main point of difference between the Indian Labour Unions on this Railway and the Administration and as the point has been set down by the Railway Board for discussion with the Agents in October 1929 ", you do not propose to make any further comment at present. What was the result of the discussion with the Railway Board?—It is a confidential document.

*Diwan Chaman Lall* : I suppose we can have that.

K-4596. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You will consider whether it is possible for you to get that document and let us know?—Yes.

K-4597. *Mr. Cliff* : In your memorandum you say that " no correspondence, representation or deputation is received by the Agent, except in connection with a matter which is or raises questions which are of common interest to a class of employees." It is based on some railway order of the Government of India. Some railway Agents have told us that they actually deal with these cases. Are they acting in contravention of the Railway Board's orders?—I think they are disregarding the instruction of the Railway Board.

K-4598. Could I invite you to disregard them also ? Some Agents have told us that they accept representations on behalf of individuals. I invite you to do what other Agents have done to contravene this order ?

*Sir Alexander Murray* : Perhaps you must not be encouraged to contravene the Railway Board's orders.

K-4599. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : I understand that the Bengal Nagpur Railway Union has appointed a sort of a Board of Censors who go through the individual grievances themselves and satisfy themselves whether they are genuine or not and whether they are worthy of being forwarded to the Agent. Therefore you have some sort of check with regard to the presentation of these grievances. May I also add my request to Mr. Cliff's request that you might consider individual grievances also when put forward through the unions ?—What will be the next request ?

*Mr. Cliff* : They are unceasing.

*The witness (Mr. Jarrad)* : When I was on special duty for some time I was dealing with individual cases put forward by labour unions. In the majority of those cases put forward by the Indian labour unions I found that the facts represented by them were entirely different to the facts that we had on record, even the statement of the man himself given in his own writing. Their contention was that if they were required to go through these cases themselves first they should be given free passes and leave during duty hours to see their clients and so on. In fact they required the Bengal Nagpur Railway to have labour union officials giving all their time to labour matters and paid for by the Railway. That is my trouble regarding the Labour Union dealing with individual cases.

K-4600. *Mr. Cliff* : Just on this point I was under the impression that as Agent of a Company-managed railway you were not bound by these orders. Are you quite sure that you are bound by this particular rule ?—I have as far as possible followed the policy laid down by the Railway Board.

K-4601. *Sir Alexander Murray* : If you desired to run counter to the direction of the Railway Board you could do so ?—It would be possible, but it would seriously embarrass the Government of India.

K-4602. We asked you before to what extent you do act on the suggestions of the Government of India regarding wages and other improvements. You told us that if one line acted counter to the instructions of the Railway Board and another line followed the instructions there would be chaos and that there should be a uniform practice on all the railways whether the orders of the Board were mandatory or not ?—Yes.

*Mr. Cliff* : That may be so, but some of the unions have told us in their memoranda that this is one of their main difficulties.

K-4603. We are not pressing you to tell us what happened at the conference. But you say, "I do not propose to make any further comment at the present moment." On that particular point would you tell us whether you are or not in favour of the idea ?—That is a question which



was fully considered and I have given my views to my Board of Directors. Before I give a different opinion I think it will be necessary for me to consult my Board of Directors.

K-4604. *Sir Alexander Murray* : If you desire to say anything more in this connection you will consider it and let us know later on ?—Yes.

K-4605. *Diwan Chaman Lall* : I have seen many balance sheets of railway unions but I have never seen a balance sheet of a Company-managed railway. I wonder if you could supply us with one ?—Certainly.

K-4606. *Mr. Cliff* : In your memorandum you say that “ in the matter of leave and passes to Union Officials and delegates on Union business the rules laid down in the Railway Board’s letters Nos. 6419-E., dated the 10th December 1928 and 25th March 1929 are observed.” These rules were in practice but have now been discontinued ?—Yes, that is so.

K-4607. Will you give us your opinion as to whether they should be continued or discontinued ?—It entirely depends on the purpose for which the passes are to be used. My experience was they were used to make the necessary arrangements for a strike. We were giving them first class accommodation and first class passes for that purpose.

K-4608. You want people to build up trade union organizations. If they are to succeed in any reasonable period they do want facilities and some facilities of this character. As Agent of this Railway are you in favour of giving them some facilities for this purpose ?—If I was sure that they were working for the genuine interests of labour I would recommend facilities.

K-4609. Facilities to people employed on your own Railway for instance ?—Yes.

K-4610. In your memorandum dealing with the system of fining and disciplinary action and so on you say that “ the system is well understood by the staff.” Have your staff known of any other system ?—No, not since I came out on this Railway.

K-4611. You answered a question of the Chairman with regard to wages board. This Commission has got very many representations from the employees of all the railways they have so far been to. It seems to me that here is a matter to which our urgent attention must be drawn. You suggest that there should be a special committee of officers. It seems to me that there are three parties interested in this question of wages—the work-people, the administration and the public. Here are a tremendous number of men to be covered. Do you see any practical objection to a wages board constituted of the representatives of these three interests ?—Do you mean a wages board for each individual railway or for all railways ?

K-4612. That is a problem that requires attention. It may be done by one board if it can cover the whole area. But some measure of standardization is necessary. Would you have any objection to the representatives of the public, the administration and the men sitting on a board for that purpose ?—I have no objection.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**(RAILWAYS)****Eightieth Meeting.**

KHARAGPUR.

Thursday, 20th February 1930.

PRESENT :

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E. (*Presiding*).

Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, Kt., Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

K.C.S.I., C.I.E.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart.

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

I.M.S., *Medical Assessor*.

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E.

Mr. J. K. CHATTERJI.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*

Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S.

Mr. A. DIBDIN.

} *Joint Secretaries.*

Mr. KANSHI NATH MUTTU, Mr. W. V. R. NAIDU, Mr. P. RAMA-CHANDRA RAO, Mr. SOMAYAJULU, and Mr. A. N. BOSE, representatives of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union, Kharagpur.

K-4613. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Mr. Muttu, I understand that you are the General Secretary of the Union ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : Yes.

K-4614. Will you tell us whether you are a railway worker ?—Yes. I am an accounts clerk.

K-4615. How many years have you been on the railway ?—I have been on the railway for about 20 years, but it is not continuous service.

K-4616. *Mr. Naidu*, what are you please ?—(*Mr. Naidu*) : I am the Chief Vice-President of the Kharagpur Branch of the Union. (*Mr. Muttu*) : We have got branches in many places.

K-4617. Mr. Naidu, I understand that you are not now on the railway ?—(*Mr. Naidu*) : No ; I left it last year.

K-4618. How many years were you on the railway ?—For 13 years.

K-4619. On which railway ?—On the Bengal Nagpur Railway.

K-4620. Mr. Rao, are you a railway worker ?—(*Mr. Rao*) : Yes.

K-4621. How long have you been on the railway ?—My service dates back to 1905, but there is a break in the middle.

K-4622. How many years have you actually been on the railway ?—In all for 18 years ; now for 9 years and 9 years previously.

K-4623. What do you do now ?—I am the establishment clerk in the District Loco Superintendent's Office.

K-4624. Mr. Somayajulu, what are you ?—(*Mr. Somayajulu*) : I am an Assistant Station Master.

K-4625. How many years have you been on the railway ?—For 15½ years.

K-4626. And you Mr. Bose ?—(*Mr. Bose*) : I am at present a stock verifier, and have served the railway for 18 years.

K-4627. Mr. Muttu, I understand that your Union is a registered union ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : Yes.

K-4628. How many members have you got ?—We have got 25,000 members.

K-4629. I notice from the returns supplied by the Railway Board that they indicate that you have got 14,000 members ?—We have got 15,000 paying members now.

K-4630. What are the other members ?—The other members have also signed the pledge, but they are in arrears as regards payment of subscriptions.

K-4631. You said you have branches in many places. How many branches have you got ?—17.

K-4632. Extending how far ?—Extending over 2,400 miles of the Bengal Nagpur Railway.

K-4633. What types of workers do you represent ?—We represent all types of workers.

K-4634. Is a great majority of the members of your Union employees in workshops ?—We have about 5,000 to 6,000 members working in workshops. The rest are on the line

K-4635. Have you got a constitution ?—I have not got it here.

K-4636. You can send us a copy of your constitution and a copy of your accounts ?—Yes.

K-4637. Are you a member of the All-India Railway Federation ?—Yes, we are.

K-4638. Are you members of the All-India Trade Union Congress ?—We had been, but in the last annual meeting of the Congress we had to secede from the Congress due to a difference of opinion. Since then we have not formed any other organization.

K-4639. On the question of recruitment you say that outside recruitment takes place in filling up vacancies. The Bengal Nagpur Railway in

their memorandum say that men are recruited from outside sources only when it is not possible to fill vacancies by the appointment of men who are already employed on their railway ?—The question is one of deciding whether a man who is already in the service is fit for filling up the vacancy. If the railway administration do not want to promote him, they merely say that he is not capable to hold the post.

K-4640. What is your experience of the Personnel Officer who deals with recruitment of labour for workshops in Khargpur ?—People do not want him ; he does not do anything.

K-4641. Why should they not want him ?—Because he is not of any use to them. For instance, if a man goes to him for explaining the difficulties about quarters, he is told that his application will be forwarded to the executive officer who is in sole charge of the matter, and that the Personnel Officer cannot do anything.

K-4642. But let us deal with recruitment ?—Even in the case of recruitment the Personnel Officer cannot do much because the man who is selected must please the Foreman who is all in all. If the Personnel Officer were to send a man whom the Foreman does not want to take, the Foreman will simply say : “ He is no good, and I am not going to take him ”.

K-4643. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Does the Foreman test him ?—A nominal test is carried out.

K-4644. *Sir Alexander Murray* : The Personnel Officer has been working for a year or two ?—Might be.

K-4645. Your feeling is that he does not serve any good purpose ?—That is so.

K-4646. Will you please give specific reasons for saying that ? What is your real objection to having a Personnel Officer who interviews applicants and says whether they are suitable or not ?—My Union will have no objection for a Personnel Officer who can exercise the power of appointing a suitable man. But if he is only a man to recommend to the Foreman and the Foreman is the person who can accept or reject a candidate at his own sweet will, then we say that the Personnel Officer serves no purpose. Formerly, if one wanted to get into the workshop he had to please the Foreman, but now he has to please two men instead.

K-4647. If the men have any grievances, do you say that they do not go to the Personnel Officer to put before him those grievances ?—I do not say that no body goes to him. They some time go to him, but their experience has been that he cannot do any good to them. They have realised that going to him has had no effect.

K-4648. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Do you say that in no case it has had any effect ?—In some petty cases it might have had some effect. By petty cases I mean complaints of the nature that men have not received their salary in time, or that amounts which are not due to the Employee's Urban Bank have been deducted from their salary and so on. In such cases, enquiries are perhaps made and the matter is put right.

K-4649. *Sir Alexander Murray* : We find from the Bengal Nagpur Railway memorandum that workshops employees are given every facility

to represent their grievances to the District Loco Superintendent Personnel at Khargpur. You have already said that some of your workers go to him. But why should any body with a grievance not be willing to go to the Personnel Officer ?—As I have already pointed out, their experience is that he cannot do any good. He is merely a forwarding agency.

K-4650. Dealing with the question of unemployment you say in your memorandum that employees are discharged without a proper enquiry. If an employee is discharged and he goes to the Personnel Officer, does the Personnel Officer not institute an enquiry into the case ?—No public enquiry is made by him.

K-4651. Supposing I am a worker and in trouble with my superior officer, and I go to the Personnel Officer, does he not make any enquiries into the case ?—No public enquiry is made so that neither the Union nor the discharged man knows the real reasons for the discharge. The Personnel Officer makes private enquiries and, from what we understand, he simply goes through the relevant papers and informs the man that he was at fault and therefore he had been discharged.

K-4652. You also say that “appeals are not unfrequently suppressed”. Who suppresses appeals ?—Appeals are to be made to the higher authorities through the immediate officers. It is the will and pleasure of the immediate officers to forward or to withhold an appeal.

K-4653. The Agent of this Railway told us that every worker has a right of appeal to the Agent, and you say now that these appeals never reach the Agent and that they are suppressed ?—I do not say that they never reach the Agent. There may be some cases in which the Agent might have received a few appeals, but in a large number of cases they are not forwarded by the immediate officers.

K-4654. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : Your position is that the intermediate officer has the discretion either to forward a petition to the Agent or not as he chooses ?—I do not think that discretion is given to him on paper. On paper you will find that every appeal addressed either to the Agent or the Chief Mechanical Engineer must be sent to them.

K-4655. Your complaint is that in practice it is not done ?—That is so.

K-4656. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you had experience of district welfare committees ?—I have no personal experience of them, but I have heard of them.

K-4657. Have any of your representatives present here served on such a committee ?—No.

K-4658. Why do you not take advantage of these Committees ?—(*Mr. Rao*) : They are nominated bodies.

K-4659. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Are they not partly elected ?—At present they are nominated bodies. (*Mr. Muttu*) : We have no chance to get into them.

K-4660. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have none of your Union members, to your knowledge, ever been nominated to these committees ?—At one or two places they have been nominated.

K-4661. What was the experience of these men ?—Their experience was that these committees were merely recommending bodies and that

much attention to their recommendations was not paid by the higher authorities.—(*Mr. Rao*) : One of the Union members at Nainpur was nominated to the welfare committee, and his experience was that he could do no work there and that the committee was of very little use to the people.

K-4662. We were given figures showing that in some districts many references had been made from the District Officers to the welfare committees and that after the committee had dealt with those references it referred them back to the District Officers who had on many occasions revised their previous decisions and had given effect to the recommendations of the committee ?—If that was the case and if the welfare committees had produced such marvellous results people would not cling to the unions but would easily take recourse to the welfare committees. The people have no trust and confidence in such committees as they are constituted at present.

K-4663. Do I take it that if you were given the right of election, you would then take an active interest in the welfare committees ?—My opinion is that if there is an elected majority in these committees then perhaps they may be of some use. But even then I am not very sanguine of their utility, because the members of the committee who will sit to pass judgment on the decision of a District Officer are subordinate to him.

K-4664. If the District Officer does not give effect to the recommendations of the welfare committee, they can appeal to the District Board of Officers on which that officer is not represented. What is your objection to the District Board of Officers ?—The members constituting the District Board are all nominated, and people have no trust or confidence in them.

K-4665. Supposing it was an elected body, what objection would you have ?—If it were thrown open for election to all the railway employees, then it can do some good because the people will elect only those in whom they have trust and confidence. But under the existing conditions people have no trust and confidence in that body. (*Mr. Bose*) : With regard to the welfare committees, I understand that it is only an attempt to kill the trade union and as soon as this trade union is weakened the committees will be kicked off.

K-4666. You do not credit the railway with good intentions ?—No, so far as these welfare committees are concerned. (*Mr. Muttu*) : From our past experience we had to come to that conclusion.

K-4667. *Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola* : Going over your written statement one is impressed by the fact that you try to make out a very strong case against racial discrimination that exists according to you in the services, and you point out various instances in which men doing the same kind of work are paid differently on racial grounds. Are you satisfied that this difference in wages or salaries is due only to racial considerations and not due to a difference in qualifications ?—(*Mr. Rao*) : We say that the difference is only due to racial considerations.

K-4668. Your contention is that though both an Indian and a non-Indian are equally qualified, a difference is made because of racial considerations ?—That is so. I will give you an instance. Almost all the engine Drivers of passenger trains on the narrow gauge of this railway are Indians, but when they come to the main line they are not given charge of passenger

trains but they are made to drive only the goods trains. When they can manage the passenger trains on the narrow gauge they can easily manage on the main line also, but the racial consideration comes in the way.

K-4669. But non-Indian Drivers are promoted to take charge of mail and passenger trains after they serve on goods trains, are they not?—Yes.

K-4670. Your position is that distinction is made not on merits or qualifications but purely on race?—That is so. There is no question of merit as far as apprentices are concerned. A European lad and an Indian lad join together as apprentices in the workshops, but the stipend given to them varies. In the Carriage and Wagon Department also the rates of wages for Indian and non-Indian probationary Assistant Train Examiners differ. I might also say that only European and Anglo-Indian Station Masters are posted to stations where the salary is higher while Indians are posted to stations where the post does not carry so much salary. This is nothing but racial discrimination pure and simple.

K-4671. Is it your contention that senior Indian Drivers are superseded in favour of junior Anglo-Indian and European Drivers?—(Mr. Rao) : Yes.

K-4672. Can you produce instance of that description?—I can produce many instances. European Drivers are started on a higher pay and within a short time they are employed as mail Drivers. But Indian Drivers even though they put in long periods of service cannot hope to become mail Drivers.—(Mr. Muttu) : May I read an extract from the speech of Mr. Hill, one of the senior officers of the Railway, which he made in 1920?

K-4673. But we are concerned with the present state of affairs in 1930?—My point is that the policy of racial discrimination has not changed since 1920. The state of things in 1930 is the same as it was in 1920.

K-4674. Would you send to the Commission instances of such racial discrimination with dates?—(Mr. Rao) : Yes, we will send a list.

K-4675. You say that “much against the recommendation of the State Railways Workshops Committee of 1926, the Railway has started the policy of giving out on contract manufacture work such as loco cylinders, etc., which used to be manufactured in Khargpur workshops to be more independent of local labour”. Are you sure that this change of policy is not due to the fact that the Railway Company is able to obtain their requirements much cheaper from private firms than they could make at their workshops?—The Raven Committee have stated that the railway workshops are in a much better position to manufacture these things. They could manufacture the articles much cheaper also if they liked.

K-4676. The men want security of tenure and on the other hand the administration are anxious that you should not go on strike and dislocate the work. Have you any suggestion to make so that there might be better co-operation between the administration and the workmen?—(Mr. Muttu) : There is a Persian proverb which says that a happy labourer works hard. If the labourers are contented why should they go on strike? They have come here to earn their livelihood and they have no other means.

of livelihood. We always do our best to avoid strikes, but, when it is forced upon us that strike is the only way of remedying our grievances we go on strike.

K-4677. In your memorandum you have made several demands. If all of them were conceded, would it not increase the cost of production enormously so that you might not be able to compete with private firms at all ?—There is now too much of supervision and very costly supervision. There should be less costly supervision. If the Railway is in any financial difficulty what is the use of making a retrenchment at the bottom alone ? There should be retrenchment uniformly all through.

K-4678. In your memorandum you say :

“ Incidentally it may be pointed out that temptation to place orders for contract work or indent of stores for personal reasons by officials should be avoided to safeguard the interests of the workers.”

What do you mean by “ personal reasons ” ?—We have discussed this question in our memorandum and shown that the officers want to bring down the power of labour by placing contracts outside.

K-4679. But “ personal reasons ” may mean “ personal gratification ” ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : It is an open secret that commissions are given on orders.

K-4680. Do the officers take the commission ?—It is a usual thing in the world and I do not think that our officers do not take it. (*Mr. Naiidu*) : Otherwise why should officers mention the name of the firm from which such and such an article should be requisitioned ? We have many such examples in the Electrical Department.

K-4681. *Sir Alexander Murray* : May it not be due to the fact that that firm alone could supply the best articles ?—There is the Stores Department to look after that point. Why should officers specify the firms ?

K-4682. *Mr. Clow* : In your memorandum you refer to five recent cases of discharge. These do not include workshop cases, do they ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : We have not collected all the cases ; we have given 5 cases as typical instances.

K-4683. When there was retrenchment in the workshops were you able to satisfy Mr. Rogers who inquired that there was any victimization of union officials ?—His report has not been published yet. I believe he was satisfied with our statements.

K-4684. Dealing with the piece-work system in machine shops you quote a note put before the administration at the Joint Enquiry Committee. Whose is this note ?—The note was prepared by the labour members of the committee. The committee consisted of a Chairman, an Accounts Officer, 4 members of the Labour Union and 4 members representing the workshops.

K-4685. Therefore it represents the views of the labour representatives and the workshop representatives ?—Yes.

K-4686. The note says that piece-work earnings in this shop have increased from Rs. 28,744 in 1928 to Rs. 40,000 in 1929. Is this correct ?—That was the information given to us by the administration.



K-4687. Have you any reason to suppose that it is not correct ?—I do not question the accuracy of it.

K-4688. Has the number of piece workers increased from 1928 to 1929 ?—The whole establishment is not covered by this "piece-work" system. This system prevails only in shops Nos. 6, 7 and 9. Even there it is not given to all the men ; out of 500 men about 100 to 125 are on piece-work. The number of piece workers was probably more in 1929 than in 1928. But we have no information about that.

K-4689. At any rate the average profit per man went up over 10 per cent ?—That refers only to one particular section. The men were not in favour of piece-work. They were made to work too hard and the rates given to them were very low. Moreover they did not like the clock system which notes everything connected with the machine such as the time when the man started work, or stopped work, the number of hours the machine remained idle the out-turn for the day and the month and so on.

K-4690. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Were the clocks inaccurate ?—No.

K-4691. You do not mean to say that the clocks were being run unfairly ?—No.

K-4692. Does the clock show the true facts or not ?—The clock shows the true facts.

K-4693. And the men do not like these facts to be produced every day ?—No, that is not the point. Suppose the clock shows that a man is able to do so much in the first half-hour in the morning. Then the engineers say that that work can be done in half an hour every time. How can we run the machine at the same speed all through the day ?

K-4694. *Mr. Clow* : In your memorandum you express yourself in favour of weekly payment of wages. Is that for all the workers on the railway ?—No, only for the workshops staff.

K-4695. You do not want it for the Station Masters ?—No. Station Masters are literate people and they can understand their affairs better than workmen.

K-4696. In your memorandum you say that on 11th February 1927 Mr. W. V. R. Naidu was transferred to work under an officer known to be very inimical towards the Union. Was that to be a permanent transfer ?—(*Mr. Naidu*) : I was not told at the time that I was transferred temporarily. Subsequently when there was trouble on account of my transfer there was a telephone message from the Agent saying that I was transferred only temporarily.

K-4697. Dealing with workmen's compensation you say that all railway employees are not eligible for compensation under the Act and that this distinction should be abolished. What distinction do you mean ?—Only workshop men and manual employees are entitled to compensation. Station Masters and clerical staff such as store clerks, store issuers, time checkers and so on would not get any compensation if they were injured in the course of their duties.

K-4698. Station Masters get compensation. Do you know of any case in which an employee of that kind has been refused compensation because he was not eligible ? The only exceptions that the Act makes in the case

of railways are "those permanently employed in any administrative district or subdivisional office of the Railway."—(*Mr. Naidu*) : I cannot think of any at the present moment. (*Mr. Muttu*) : Then railway employees working in portions of the railway running through Indian States are not entitled to compensation under the Act.

K-4699. That is a point we have to look into. Do you know of any case of that kind in which compensation has not been paid ?—I do not know of any at the present moment. I have not heard of any.

K-4700. You say that on account of the ignorance of the workmen applications for compensation are frequently delayed more than six months and thus become time-barred under the Act and that this time bar should be abolished. Do you know of any case in which the Company pleaded before the Commissioner that it was time-barred ?—(*Mr. Rao*) : Up to this time I have not heard of any such case. Anyhow there is this condition in the law and it is better that it is removed.

K-4701. It does not seem to have operated harshly ?—No. (*Mr. Bose*) : I have the case of a woman who lost both her legs on account of an accident. She has been in the hospital for the last five or six months. Her wages have been paid to her but no attempt is made to pay her any compensation.

K-4702. Why was any attempt not made to claim compensation ?—She is in the hospital and how can she claim compensation. The Union cannot do it on her behalf because we are told we cannot bring up individual cases.

K-4703. But the Act definitely provides that any person may plead a workmen's compensation case before the Commissioner ?—(*Mr. Rao*) : Till now the Union has been putting up the cases of only those who are members of the Union and who make a complaint to the Union. We do not take up cases voluntarily.

K-4704. You say that the unions should be allowed to apply for compensation without being gagged as being individual cases ?—Yes, we submitted the case of a workman for compensation and were told that it was an individual case and that the Union had no right to represent it.

K-4705. If you are not satisfied with the reply of the administration you may go to the Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation. You are not gagged before the Commissioner, I believe ?—No, we do not say that. Subsequently we pointed out to the administration that it was a workmen's compensation case and they were prepared to make arrangements for payment of compensation.

K-4706. *Mr. Joshi* : In your memorandum you have mentioned certain rates of payment for European and Anglo-Indian apprentices and certain lower rates to Indian apprentices. Have there been any cases of Indian getting the higher rates paid to European and Anglo-Indians ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : I have heard of none except one case recently, that of a relative of one of the high officials of the Railway.

K-4707. Is that true also in the case of unbound apprentices ? Is there any Indian unbound apprentice on Rs. 40 to 55 ?—None at all.

K-4708. And I suppose the same is true about the carriage and wagon shops ?—Certainly.

K-4709. In your memorandum you deal with the rates for piece workers. Is it not one of your objections to the piece-work that when men begin to work hard and earn a little more the rates are reduced in order that the men may not earn much ?—Yes, that has been our experience all along. For instance if a workman works hard and finishes an article in a short time he is entitled to get high wages. But the Foreman and the Engineer when they see that the workmen get a big amount reduce the quantity of work recorded as done for that month and take it over the next month. Ultimately they reduce the rates also.

K-4710. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you got specific cases where quantities of work were reduced ?—I have not them with me at present ; I can give them if required.

K-4711. *Mr. Joshi* : You can send them to the Commission ?—Yes, I shall send them.

K-4712. With regard to sickness insurance and old age pension schemes, would the workers be willing to contribute their quota if Government and the employers also contributed their quota ?—Surely.

K-4713. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : But you have not mentioned it here ?—We will contribute our quota, but the Railway and the Government should bear the rest of the expenditure.

K-4714. *Mr. Joshi* : During the strike what classes of people were evicted from their houses ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : The workshop men were evicted. (*Mr. Somayajulu*) : And clerks were evicted.

K-4715. Were they given a month's notice when they were evicted ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : No notice was given. The police were brought in during the strike and the men were asked to vacate the houses in two or three days.

K-4716. Who is the Magistrate in Khargpur ?—He is the Midnapur Magistrate ; but the executive officer here previously had powers of a Magistrate on the railway estate, and I am informed that he used to sign those eviction notices himself. That was when Col. Anderson was the executive officer here.—(*Mr. Naidu*) : There was a case recently of a man who died ; his family was still in the house ; they had not received any settlement of their claim. The police went to the house and evicted them. The case is still pending.

K-4717. *Sir Alexander Murray* : When did the man die ?—A month or two ago.

K-4718. *Mr. Joshi* : Do the men pay any rent for these houses ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : Yes, always.

K-4719. Although they pay the rent people are evicted without notice ?—Of course they are given a few days' notice, but they are not given a month's notice ; they are only given 6 or 7 days' notice.

K-4720. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is the rent paid weekly or monthly ?—Monthly.

K-4721. When they go into the houses, do they agree to go out on 7 days' notice ?—No. (*Mr. Naidu*) : Only the upper subordinates and the clerical staff sign a form when they take the houses ; the menial staff do not sign a form.

K-4722. *Mr. Joshi* : What do you mean when you say with regard to the housing that " Railway should not under any circumstances exert official pressure on an employee in regard to housing matters, by suspending or discharging." ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : A man may put a small fence in front of his house. I admit that such a fence looks clumsy, but necessity knows no law and people have to put up these fences. But the executive officer issues orders that that fence must be removed at once. The man does not do it because he cannot do it conveniently as his wife and children are there. His wife is there during the day and during the night ; she cannot go to the public latrine during the night because it may be two or three furlongs from the house. If for those reasons the man does not remove the fence his ticket is stopped. (*Mr. Somayajulu*) : One Assistant Station Master built a cowshed in front of his house, there being no provision for a cowshed. He was asked to demolish it ; he did not do so and he was transferred for disobeying that order.

K-4723. *Sir Alexander Murray* : But why should he build a cowshed among the houses ?—Where is he to keep his cow, Sir ? (*Mr. Rao*) : An Assistant Train Examiner was given a house and was living in that house. Subsequently the railway administration wanted that house to give to another employee. This man was asked to vacate the house, but he would not vacate it until he was given another convenient house. Because he did not vacate that house he was ultimately discharged from the service.

K-4724. *Mr. Joshi* : Whose house was that ?—That is one of the railway houses.

K-4725. If it is a railway house the administration can give him notice to leave the house ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : But unless the Railway gives him another house to live in where is he to go to ? He has a wife and children ; he cannot live under a tree by the side of the road.

K-4726. You want some municipality in Khargpur ?—Yes.

K-4727. How is that municipality to be financed ?—From the taxes as usual.

K-4728. Although you pay taxes apparently the management is not in your hands ?—There are some of our representatives on the Station Committee, but they are very few and they have no voice there.

K-4729. Your point is that as you pay taxes the municipality should be a wholly elected body ?—Yes. At present there is an election, but there are so many nominated or *ex-officio* members on the Committee that they always have a majority.

K-4730. What is the racial discrimination of which you speak with regard to education ?—The figures which we give in the memorandum show the position.

K-4731. Your point is that they are spending more money on a smaller number of Anglo-Indian and European children than they spend on a larger number of Indian children ?—Yes. We are in very great need of better educational facilities. Some of our rooms in the Indian Institute were handed over to the school.

K-4732. At present is there any institute for workshop men ?—No.

K-4733. Is there any provision for games and recreation ?—There is a recreation ground for outdoor games, such as cricket and football.

K-4734. Do poor people play those games ?—A few do.

K-4735. So that there is no general provision for the recreation of the poor people ?—No.

K-4736. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : But is not membership of the Sports Club voluntary ?—Yes, and every body is not anxious to play football.

K-4737. Every body who is anxious to play can play ?—No. They can enjoy some small indoor amusements but they cannot play cricket.

K-4738. *Mr. Joshi* : Is there any objection to workshop people being admitted to the present institutes ?—We have already taken in more men than we can accommodate ; for lack of accommodation we have had to reject many applications from workshop people.

K-4739. How many Unions are there here now ?—Actually there is only one Union, the Bengal Nagpur Railway Indian Labour Union ; but a few blacklegs who were turned out of our Union have formed a separate one at Garden Reach, and some interested gentlemen have formed a Muslim League here which they call a Welfare Committee or something like that.

K-4740. Does the administration discriminate with regard to privileges between these three bodies ?—(*Mr. Rao*) : Yes ; it came to my notice lately that the administration have been receiving individual complaints from the Garden Reach organization and from the Muslim Welfare Committee, whereas in the case of the Indian Labour Union we were told that an individual case could not be considered and were referred to the statement in the Agent's letter.

K-4741. Does the administration provide better housing for Europeans than for Indians of the same grade ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : That is certainly so ; all the houses in Khargpur which are provided for the Europeans are much better than those provided for Indians of the same grade.

K-4742. Is it true that the administration provides electric light for the Europeans quarters while it does not provide electric light for the Indian quarters ?—Yes, the administration regards electric light as a necessity for the Europeans but not for the Indians. We have been asking for the electric light for the last three years, but we have not got it yet.

K-4743. *Sir Alexander Murray* : With regard to racial discrimination the Railway Board have told us that there is a difference between 1920 and 1930 ?—There is a little difference. but practically speaking the racial discrimination has not been stopped.

K-4744. *Mr. Joshi* : Are certain grades, such as those of Station Masters, Guards, Drivers, and Ticket Collectors reserved for Anglo-Indians and Europeans, while other grades are reserved for Indians ?—Yes.

K-4745. *Miss Power* : You say in your memorandum that in Khargpur for a total labour force of about 18,000 there are only about 6,000 quarters. Is it your contention that the Company has only built enough houses for about one-third of the labour force ?—Exactly.

K-4746. Does that include those houses which the workers have built for themselves on the Company's land ?—No, it does not include those houses.

K-4747. If you say that one-third are housed in the Company's houses, what percentage of the workers have built houses for themselves on the Company's land ?—They are very few ; they are the small *bustis* which you have seen. Perhaps it may be 1,000 men altogether ; not 1,000 employees but 1,000 men.

K-4748. The bulk of the two-thirds that are not housed by the Company are in *bustis* round about ?—They are outside the railway settlement.

K-4749. How many different types of houses are provided for the workers ?—There are five types in the old settlement ; three types in the new settlement, a different type in the traffic settlement and a new type which is being built for Muhammadans.

K-4750. Are different types reserved for different grades or may a man go into any grade he likes provided he pays the rent ?—No, the houses are fixed with regard to pay.

K-4751. Is a man allowed to sublet and take in lodgers ?—It used to be allowed, but it is not allowed now.

K-4752. *Col. Russell* : It has been stopped, has it ?—Yes.

K-4753. To-day we saw a house in a *busti* in which there were 12 inmates : a worker and his family and three lodgers ?—But that is not with the consent of the railway administration or with their knowledge.

K-4754. But it does exist ?—Yes, surely it exists ; they are compelled to do it because they have no houses.

K-4755. *Miss Power* : On what system are houses allocated when they fall vacant ?—We do not know, but from the way the houses are allocated we conclude that perhaps there is a list in the housing department ; it appears that they make a seniority list according to which houses are allotted.

K-4756. On an average how many years does a man have to wait before he can get a railway house ?—Sometimes the administration say that a man of 20 years' service will get a Type 4 house ; that means that the man has waited 20 years to get a Type 4 house here.

K-4757. *Sir Alexander Murray* : But how long does a man have to wait before he gets a house of any kind ?—To my knowledge 5 or 7 years ; in the meantime they have to live in huts.

K-4758. *Miss Power* : Does the reference in your memorandum to the standard of house adopted in Australia imply that your Union demands that as the lowest type of accommodation for the railway workers ?—No, but we want better accommodation here.

K-4759. Then that paragraph does not mean that you are asking for that as the minimum standard here ?—No, of course not.

K-1760. That is merely an ideal. Are the Union demanding weekly payments of wages for the workshop hands ?—We have often talked to the workers and explained the matter to them ; they prefer weekly payment.

K-4761. Have you ever taken a census of the workers to find out ?—No.

K-4762. What do you mean when you say that drink is provided conveniently near the railway colony ?—Every year an advisory committee of Government comes to Khargpur to enquire where drink should be provided and where liquor shops should be situated. So far as we have been consulted we have, of course, always stood against it and told the Government officials to take the drink shops as far away as possible. Recently a contractor applied to move the grog shop closer to the settlement and there was an enquiry ; many people opposed bringing the grog shop nearer and it was stopped. There is no shop nearer than two furlongs from the railway settlement.

K-4763. There are no drink shops in the railway settlement ?—No.

K-4764. They do not give facilities for them ?—No.

K-4765. Have you any knowledge as to the extent of indebtedness among the members of your Union ?—Perhaps 95 per cent. of the men are indebted.

K-4766. What is the average indebtedness per head ?—It is difficult to say.

K-4767. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How do you know that 95 per cent. are in debt ?—Because we mix with them and talk to them and we know what they say.

K-4768. Do you mean to say that 9 out of every 10 men you meet are in debt ?—That is my impression ; I have not calculated it.

K-4769. If you have 10 friends, are 9 of them in debt ?—Yes.

K-4770. *Miss Power* : If that is so, has your Union provided any facilities to assist the workers to get money at a lower rate of interest than they have to pay to outside money-lenders ?—Our Union takes very small subscriptions ; we have not been able to do anything of that kind for the workmen though we wish to do so. Of course our attention has always been engaged in the troubles which have occurred and we have not had time to deal with that question although that is our aim.

K-4771. What percentage of the workers' children of school going age go to the Company's schools here ?—I think it will be about 25 per cent. at present.

K-4772. Railway workers' children ?—Yes.

K-4773. What do you mean when you say there should be no restriction in regard to facilities for children to travel from their homes to places where education can be received ; do you mean that the children should be given free travelling passes ?—Yes.

K-4774. There is no restriction on their travelling at present, is there ?—No.

K-4775. You want all children of any grade of worker who have to go to school some distance from the place where they live to be given a free travelling pass ?—That is a facility we expect.

K-4776. Do you also claim that the Company should pay full board and school allowance for any child of a worker whose parents desire to send it away from home to school ?—We should prefer to have that, but we press this point in favour of low-paid men first.

K-4777. Do you claim that the Company should give a free travelling pass and, if necessary, full boarding and school allowance to any child of a lower grade worker whose parents may wish to see him educated?—Yes; that only refers to college education and would only apply to a few.

K-4778. You say: "the 14 adult primary schools attached to loco-sheds for teaching Indian running staff in the 3 R's are not of material assistance to the employees". Why are they not?—Those are only to teach the firemen and *khalasis* a little reading and writing of Hindi. Sometimes when people come they are taught. But those who do not care to come are not taken up.

K-4779. But you do not suggest that the Company should force these people to attend, do you?—If the school is formed of course there should be discipline there.

K-4780. Are you contending that the Company should drive these adult workers to the adult primary schools? Do you say that they are of no material assistance to the employees because the employees do not attend regularly or is it because the teaching, which is given when they do attend, is inferior?—I do not think there are adequate arrangements for teaching; there is only one teacher who gives a little lecture in Hindi and Urdu.

K-4781. One teacher attached to each school?—Yes.

K-4782. *Mr. Cliff*: You say: "Prior to April 1927, the Union had at least the right of representing such cases, but this inconvenient right has been withdrawn". Why was it withdrawn?—(*Mr. Rao*): I cannot say why it was withdrawn, but it was withdrawn after the strike of 1927. (*Mr. Naidu*): It was done to make the Union unpopular and to discredit the trade union movement.

K-4783. How long had you the right of representing these cases?—(*Mr. Muttu*): From 1920 till 1926. We made representations to the administration, but those representations were ignored, and it was only the cumulative effect of that which caused the strike; therefore the administration decided to cut at the root and allow no representation at all. A letter was written withdrawing this right.

K-4784. What did the letter really say?—Of course they twisted it; they said the rules which were accepted by the Agent and the Home Board never meant that they gave us the right of representation of individual cases; they said we had not that right although they had been dealing with cases which had been referred to them.

K-4785. I have a copy of a letter, dated 18th January 1927, which says, they agree that it is desirable to remove any fears on this matter which might exist; that is dealing with the allegations of insecurity of service. It also refers to an opportunity being afforded to union officials to be present at an enquiry dealing with men dismissed from the workshops. What occurred between January 1927 and April 1927 to bring about a change of policy?—Because there was a strike on the Bengal Nagpur Railway in February 1927. This is the letter which I received from the Agent. It is dated 1st April 1927 and it says: "I enclose a copy of the Rules of recognition of the Union and must call your attention to Rules 9, 10 and 11, reading as follows".



K-4786. You can tell us the main point of the letter ?—" Under Rule 9 no representation may be made by the Union on matters concerning an individual employee. That is to say, representations may only be made on matters which concern a class or classes of employees generally. From time to time I have dealt with cases which were actually concerned with only single individuals on your representation that the ruling in the particular individual case actually concerned a large group of employees. As I find this intention of the rule has been abused, I propose to apply the rules strictly in future and no representation contravening this rule addressed to the Agent or any other official will receive attention."

K-4787. What were the grounds upon which the Agent complained that you had abused these rights ?—We do not know what their contention is ; we have always tried to find out the truth and then represent the cases to them.

K-4788. Did you make any representations to the new Agent in April ?—More than once.

K-4789. Have you made representations to the succeeding Agent that you should have a right of dealing with individual cases ?—Yes, many times.

K-4790. Approximately how many men are employed in the shops ?—At present about 8,700.

K-4791. How many work-people have you sent to the District Welfare Committee from the shops ?—We do not know.

K-4792. *Sir Alexander Murray* : I understand it does not apply to the shops ?—No, it does not.

K-4793. *Mr. Cliff* : The evidence given is that the District Welfare Committee consists of 6 members of the Indian subordinate staff representing the 4 main departments ; does not that cover the shops ?—No, it does not.

K-4794. Is there any machinery other than the Superintendent personally in the cadre of the Loco. and Carriage and Wagon Departments ?—No.

K-4795. Is your Union prepared to work machinery with a view to settling matters in dispute ?—Yes, and we do sometimes as far as we can represent them.

K-4796. Have you made representations that you should have an opportunity as a union to make representations on matters arising out of employment ?—The administration has never acknowledged that on paper, but the Superintendent of Workshops often gives us a chance of representing cases and he hears us. (*Mr. Rao*) : We have several times approached our administration and we were told at the last interview we had with the Agent that he was prepared to consider the question of giving the Union the privilege of referring individual cases and also giving us facilities for carrying on the Union on true trade union principles. On the 13th of this month, February, our Agent promised us that he would consider the matter and our President is going into the matter probably to-morrow.

K-4797. If a scheme of that kind is provided, is your Union prepared to face its responsibility ?—Yes.

K-4798. What control have you over the men ? At the present moment while you are making a representation to this Commission a large number of people are standing outside this building ?—They are curious to know what is going on.

K-4799. They have stopped work ?—They will lose their pay for the day.

K-4800. The Railway Agents say that they would be prepared to deal with the trade unions provided the trade unions could exercise control over their members ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : Perhaps the railway administration will themselves admit that this Labour Union used to say one word to the people and that was obeyed as soon as it was uttered. But since the administration has refused to give us facilities or indulgence the blacklegs of whom I have spoken have been provoking the people and saying this is a Commission which should be boycotted.

K-4801. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Since when did that change take place ?—(*Mr. Naidu*) : After the last strike. (*Mr. Muttu*) : The Agent said the Chief Mechanical Engineer would look into these grievances and decide them but he did not look into these matters for three months ; he continued postponing the matter and the Union cannot ask the men to be content for ever.

K-4802. *Mr. Cliff* : I think you mentioned that, while representation offers opportunities, it also involves responsibilities ?—Yes, it does.

K-4803. Is your Union prepared to accept the responsibility of controlling its members ?—We of course do our best ; I do not think the administration deny that. We do try to do that, but there have been certain instances in the last few months which have led to trouble with the men ; certain people are provoking the men.

K-4804. In addition to dealing with your own proposals, are you prepared to face the difficulties of the administration ?—Yes, we are always willing to do that ; we have always tried to help the railway administration when they have asked us to do so ; but when conditions are peaceful we are ignored ; as soon as the crisis is over we are ignored.

K-4805. How is the Station Committee constituted ?—It is constituted by some rules framed by the Agent ; in my experience those rules have been worked during the last 10 or 20 years, but of a sudden in 1927 the whole constitution was changed without it being put before the Committee and without the opportunity being given to the Committee to discuss the rules. I think Col. Anderson was the executive officer then.

K-4806. I want to know how the Station Committee is constituted ?—  
• There are 15 elected members and there are 15 wards throughout the settlement. There are 8 wards on the Indian side and 7 wards on the European side. Those 15 members are elected. There are also 12 *ex-officio* members ; they are railway officials and are generally European gentlemen, though sometimes one or two Indians are nominated. There are 27 members altogether ; there are only 8 from the Indian side, the rest being Europeans. Even if we carry any recommendation through the Committee the Agent can veto it.

K-4807. Are the representatives, who are elected chosen by adult householders ?—Yes.

K-4808. Every adult householder has a vote ?—Yes, every adult householder who pays As. 4 per month to the conservancy cess.

K-4809. Does this Committee impose taxation ?—Yes.

K-4810. What is the taxation and for what period is it levied ?—The taxation is generally levied as conservancy cess. But sometimes additional taxes are levied for special purposes.

K-4811. How much is the present tax ?—It is a fixed rate ; it begins with 2 annas a month per employee for the lowest paid men running up to annas 14 per month. It goes up to Rs. 3-8-0.

K-4812. I understand that the Station Committee levies a tax upon every employee of the Company living within the settlement whether he is a householder or not ?—Yes ; even if a man has not got a house he has to pay.

K-4813. How is the tax recovered ?—Through wages.

K-4814. Does the Station Committee levy taxes on the bazaar homes ?—Yes, their tax is included in their rent.

K-4815. Does your Station Committee deal with education ?—They pay Rs. 60 or Rs. 70 to the girls school on this side but nothing else. Education is dealt with by a small committee appointed from the Station Committee.

K-4816. *Mr. Clow* : Do they provide the funds for education ?—No ; the Railway makes a grant and Government makes a grant.

K-4817. *Mr. Cliff* : When this small sub-committee deals with education who finds the money ?—They make proposals to the Agent or to Government.

K-4818. What is the relation of this small committee to the Board of Education in Bengal ?—I think under the Government rules the committee management is allowed, but this committee is quite a different sort of committee.

K-4819. Had this committee had a tentative offer from the Department of Education in Bengal to make a grant for primary education ?—I do not know exactly.

K-4820. You deal with employees who come under the retrenchment scheme ?—Yes.

K-4821. Those people live in houses on this estate ; when they are retrenched do they continue to live in those houses ?—Very few of them continue.

K-4822. How many of the people who used to work on the railway are living here unemployed ?—At present I think there may be 400 or 500.

K-4823. Under the heading of “ Wages ”, you say : “ though daily rated, they are not eligible for leave ”. Are there some men who do not get annual leave ?—Yes, they do not get leave with pay. (*Mr. Naidu*) : They get 14 days in a year, but those 14 days do not come at one stretch ; they are public holidays.

K-4824. *Sir Alexander Murray* : They do get 14 days in a year on full pay ?—Yes ; they get Christmas, New Year's Day and so on when the shops are closed and they get pay for those days.

K-4825. *Mr. Cliff* : Under the heading of ' Standardization ', you refer to a speech by Sir Ernest Jackson, which you say is absolutely incorrect. Many people say that if rates of wages were increased it would not result in an improved standard of life. What does your Union say about that ?—*(Mr. Muttu)* : Of course a few men are wasters, but they are not all like that. Most of them if they had improved wages would not go and spend the money on drink.

K-4826. There has apparently been an improvement in the standard of life in India during the last 10 years ?—Yes. In the schools in Khargpur you have seen one or two boys, the sons of workmen, in the higher classes and you have seen a large percentage of such boys in the lower classes. That shows that the workmen are now learning the advantage of getting their boys educated so that I think the workers are improving.

K-4827. *Sir Alexander Murray* : But you tell us that 90 per cent. of the workers, whether skilled or unskilled, are in debt ?—Yes.

K-4828. Sir Ernest Jackson said that if wages were increased the workers would still remain in debt ?—That is not correct. My experience is that the workers are improving and they are not wasters. They are trying to form their own societies and they have applied for secondary schools, they are learning to play cricket and football, many play billiards and that sort of thing every day.

K-4829. *Mr. Cliff* : Under the heading " Hours of work " I have difficulty in understanding the statement : " Instead of a regular weekly rest day the carriage and wagon staff, traffic staff and shed staff have regular double duty every week on Sundays or preceding or following days, except one week in the month. Double duty means 12 hours or 18 hours or even 19 hours duties with an interval of only 8 hours rest " ?—There is a Station Master and two Assistant Station Masters at a station. The duties of the Station Master are merely supervisory. The result is that the two Assistant Station Masters have to divide the 24 hours between them, doing 12 hours each. The statement which you have read refers to what happens when there is a change of duty from night to day.

K-4830. *Mr. Ahmed* : How many classes of Station Masters are there ? —*(Mr. Somayajulu)* : There are six. The first-class Station Masters are all Anglo-Indians and Europeans with salaries of from Rs. 400 to Rs. 550. There are six second-grade Station Masters on salaries of from Rs. 330—400. There are no Indians in that grade. In the second class (Rs. 230 to Rs. 320) there is one Indian. In the third class, Rs. 180—220, all are Indians ; and in the fourth and fifth classes all are Indians.

K-4831. What is the reason why Indians are not taken as first class Station Masters ?—It is a question of racial discrimination.

K-4832. Who appoints them ?—The Traffic Manager.

K-4833. Is he an Indian or a European ?—European.

K-4834. Would you prefer, therefore, that an Indian should be appointed in his place ?—Of course.

K-4835. Is it a Company-managed or a State-managed railway ?—It is Company-managed.

K-4836. How many shareholders are there among the Anglo-Indians and Europeans ?—I do not know. Our Managing Director is here.

K-4837. His masters are in London and not in India ?—Yes.

K-4838. You would like to see, there being more Indians in the Company, that they should be masters ?—Yes.

K-4839. You want it to be State-managed ?—Yes. (*Mr. Muttu*) : May I say that the policy of the Union is not to consider whether the management is in European or Indian hands. It is a question of bread with us, and we want, whoever pays us, sufficient to get our bread to manage the Railway—whether European or Indian.

K-4840. That is from your own point of view, but do you not think it is in the interests of India that the Company should be State-managed ?—It may or it may not be.

K-4841. Do you think that the G. I. P. R. and the E. I. R. are much better managed than the B. N. Railway ?—No, I do not think they are.

K-4842. Do you think it would be better managed if it were State-owned ? Your friend behind said it would ?—As General Secretary of the Union I must tell you that any question about the policy of the Union should be referred to me.

K-4843. Your opinion is not that of your friend ?—No.

K-4844. With regard to housing accommodation you say there are not sufficient quarters for Indians but that there are sufficient quarters for others. You want that state of affairs remedied ?—Yes.

K-4845. That is also on the point of racial discrimination ?—Yes.

K-4846. With regard to indebtedness, do you think that a co-operative society on a big scale, with the help of the railway authorities, would help to improve matters ?—Yes.

K-4847. With regard to education, you say there is difficulty in obtaining admission to the present school. Do you think the sooner more schools and institutions are started the better ?—Yes. They are a necessity.

K-4848. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : I understand that your Union's desire is to co-operate with the Agent and staff as much as possible ?—Yes. That is our policy.

K-4849. Your point is that till lately the administration has not always wanted to co-operate with you ?—That is so.

K-4850. But you are always prepared to set them a good example ?—Exactly.

K-4851. Did you give them a copy of this document with which you have supplied the Commission ?—No.

K-4852. It might have been helpful to them to know what your grievances were ?—Yes, but they submitted their memorandum first and they did not send a copy to us.

K-4853. Has racial discrimination been on the increase or decrease during the last 3 or 4 years ?—On the increase.

K-4854. Other Unions have told us that it has decreased. Will you be prepared to submit figures showing that the proportion of Europeans and Anglo-Indians in the service is higher than it used to be ?—I have not any figures.

K-4855. Can you let us have figures ?—We will try. After the strike of 1927 the Railway was actually helped by the Anglo-Indians, and the Railway keep a bigger proportion of Anglo-Indians because they think they will help in time of trouble.

K-4856. You complain of the administration keeping in their employ men who have been loyal to them ?—They are loyal to one side and disloyal to the other.

K-4857. Do you consider that the conditions of the workmen in the workshop here are better than they are in an ordinary engineering workshop outside ?—We do not compare ourselves with outside people. We compare ourselves with railway people.

K-4858. Compare the man who is making certain articles in the railway workshop with the man who is making similar articles in a private firm. Are the conditions of the man working in the railway shop better or worse than the conditions of the man working in the private firm ?—The thing is we do not like to compare ourselves.

K-4859. I am asking you to do so ?—I do not think it is necessary to do so. This is a semi-Government Railway and a private firm is not.

K-4860. In that case you would say that your work-people had better conditions than those in a private firm ?—Compared with Government firms we are not better off.

K-4861. I want you to compare yourselves with a large number of your engineering brothers who may not be in the position of Government employees ?—I compare myself with the Railway Mail Service, and I find they are better off.

K-4862. I am talking of mechanics. The man who is a mechanic in one of your shops is not a very different individual from a man who is doing the same work in, for instance, Angus' Works. As individuals would you say there is a very great difference between them ? Do you consider that you are in a position which is different from any man who is not in Government service ?—If we had to compare ourselves.....

K-4863. I am asking you to do so ?—I will compare myself with people in other countries.

K-4864. I am asking you to compare yourselves with mechanics doing the same work in private employ ?—I do compare, and I say that the conditions of all those people should be improved.

K-4865. Then you consider that you are better off than they are ?—No, we are not better off, and they are worse off.

K-4866. Would you say that the railway work-people are more efficient than the work-people in private shops ?—I cannot say about efficiency. It may be so.

K-4867. You think that they can produce as much as you can ?—Yes.

K-4868. Although they may not be as well off as you are they can produce as much as you can ?—Yes.

K-4869. Therefore, in that particular case the fact that their conditions may not be quite so good as yours, has not affected their efficiency. Your men, although their conditions may be better, are not more efficient than the men in private workshops, whose conditions are not quite so good ?—Unless we have the figures before us how can we accept it ?

K-4870. You did make the statement that you could produce cheaper than private engineering firms ?—Yes.

K-4871. Are you actually producing cheaper, or is it merely that you could produce cheaper ?—We could produce cheaper.

K-4872. Can you produce articles as cheaply as a private engineering firm ?—Certain things. It is possible for certain firms to turn out special articles at a lower cost.

K-4873. Therefore the State would benefit by buying those articles than by manufacturing themselves ?—I am one of the railway employees, and I am not supposed to reveal railway facts here, but from my experience as an accounts' man I know that in regard to certain things the Railway has to pay more to outside firms than they have to pay in their own workshops.

K-4874. That is wrong ?—Yes. . . .

K-4875. If they can buy cheaper outside they should do so ?—How can I say not ?

K-4876. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : Is it a condition that a man is only allowed to occupy one of these houses while he is working for the Railway ?—It is supposed to be so.

K-4877. I could not go and live there if I wanted ?—No.

K-4878. An outsider could not ?—No.

K-4879. It is a condition that you must be a railway servant to live in one of these houses ?—Yes.

K-4880. Then the reason why they give notice to people to leave may be due to the fact that they say : “ As you have ceased to be working for

the Railway, you must give up your house for some body else who is now taking your place and who is working for the Railway" ?—If they take a man's house away from him during a strike or other troubles, or when he is waiting for payment, I say it is unfair.

K-4881. You would not look upon it as unjust, would you, that, if you left the service of the Railway, you should not be allowed to occupy the house ?—No.

K-4882. You say that " appeals are not infrequently suppressed ". It may be that the administration say they do not allow you to take up an individual case to the Agent ; but would they object to you putting up the general case that appeals had been suppressed ? Have you ever said " We want to put before you this general case : appeals have been suppressed. If you ask us to prove it we will have to bring up three or four individual cases to show that what we say is right when we are bringing forward the general case ". Have you ever tried to do that ? You say that some body between the Agent and the employee suppresses appeals. Therefore the Agent, who may be willing to hear the appeal, does not have the opportunity because he does not know it exists. Have you ever written to the Agent saying " This rule of yours that anybody can appeal through the proper channel is not in force because appeals are being suppressed " ? —We have not taken that up.

*Sir Victor Sassoon* : I am sure that you would not have made a statement that " appeals are not infrequently suppressed " without having had evidence brought to you by your members of such cases. Therefore it would be easy for you to get a list of these people, and if you wrote to the Agent, and he then said " Come and show me which cases have been suppressed ", you could then take up these particular instances, and he could then go into them and find out which officer, if any, was responsible for suppressing these appeals.

K-4883. *Col. Russell* : You say " Employees are forbidden to erect temporary structures as extensions ". Is that a complaint ?—Yes.

K-4884. Do you not think that temporary structures attached to houses would interfere with ventilation, lighting, and other health conditions ?—Yes, but how can you live in the house without them ?

K-4885. Would not these extensions also interfere with the amenities of neighbouring houses ?—Yes, but what is a man with his wife and grown up children, all herded into one room at night, to do ?

K-4886. You say : " The re-modelling of quarters should be undertaken by a joint committee ". Is it not a fact that such a committee has been tried in Khargpur, and that the Railway could not get any agreement among the employees on the Committee ?—(*Mr. Rao*) : Times were somewhat bad at that moment. If that committee was now in existence I believe it would work satisfactorily.

K-4887. Is it not a fact that four or five different plans were put up before this committee, and on each occasion the employees' representatives objected, and that finally the Railway said, " Give us a plan of your own ", and that none of the workmen would accept the plan ?—



(*Mr. Mutlu*) : The correct plan was not accepted by the Railway. They wanted to adopt some alternative plans.

K-4888. There might have been reasons for that. In the Bengal-Nagpur Railway memorandum the statement is made : " The general conditions of health of the employees are satisfactory ". In your memorandum you say : " The general health conditions of the workers are very deplorable ". Which is correct ?—I think what I have written is correct.

K-4889. Would you say that the people the Commission saw this morning were a satisfactory sample of the population in the railway colony ?—Yes.

K-4890. Do you differ from me when I say that I find that, if those people were a reasonable sample, the general population are in a very healthy condition ?—That is one individual opinion.

K-4891. Would it not be more feasible to have this colony converted into a municipality ?—We have recommended that.

K-4892. Do you think it would function reasonably ?—Why not.

K-4893. You say that the medical officer of Khargpur is not in charge of sanitation. Who supervises the sanitation ?—The executive officer.

K-4894. You say that the medical facilities as they exist are not at all adequate. In what way are they inadequate ?—In the hospital sometimes we find that the people are accommodated in the verandah. Accommodation is very difficult to get. Even in emergent cases we have to wait for a couple of days. There is no facility in the traffic settlement at all.

K-4895. You are not satisfied that there are sufficient doctors and dispensaries ?—No, we are not satisfied. More dispensaries are required in the traffic settlement, and the dispensaries should have good accommodation and should be manned by qualified doctors.

K-4896. In your memorandum you say that there are no trained Indian nurses for the north side at Khargpur whereas there are five European nurses exclusively for the European ward. But we saw a European nurse in one of the Indian wards to-day ?—You must have been very fortunate in that respect. It is not a usual thing with us.

K-4897. Was it meant merely to impress the Commission ?—I could not say that. I do not know their arrangements for the visit of the Commission.

K-4898. Who looks after the Indian patients ?—There are male servants and two Indian females without any qualifications. There is one nurse for the maternity ward whose qualifications I do not know.

K-4899. *Sir Alexander Murray* : We were told that there was a trained nurse connected with the Indian hospital for the last six months ?—Might be ; I have not had a chance of seeing her in the hospital.

K-4900. *Col. Russell* : You say that " Indian Doctors do not rise above the Assistant Surgeon's cadre and very highly qualified Indian doctors are not employed on this Railway." What is your complaint about the Indian medical staff ?—We have not had a single Indian medical officer ; we have had only Assistant Surgeons ; we want men of higher qualifications for our hospital.

K-4901. What is wrong with your segregation camps ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : The accommodation there is very bad. I had to live there with all the members of the family in 1926 when my daughter had an attack of small-pox. As a matter of great favour I was given two adjacent quarters. These quarters have not improved since then and remained in the same condition.

K-4902. With regard to medical certificates, does the railway administration accept certificates of outside medical practitioners ?—Sometimes they are refused. The other day the Railway Surgeon of the Khurda Road refused to countersign a certificate issued by an M. B. and a Government medical practitioner at Cuttack. Suppose I go to Peshawar and there fall sick. How can I send a certificate in the prescribed form ?

K-4903. You agree that the Railway should have some form for medical certificates ?—Yes, the whole medical profession may adopt a certain form. But the Railway always insist on M. D. form No. 4 or M. D. form No. 5 and so on.

K-4904. You refer to a panel of independent competent doctors. Of whom will this panel be composed ?—Sometimes when a man wants transfer on account of the ill-health of himself or his family the railway doctor refuses to certify to that effect. On the other hand if a District Officer wants to transfer a man with whom he is not pleased even though his wife or any other member of the family may not be quite well the doctor usually certifies them as being all right and fit to make the journey. To get over the difficulty an independent panel should be appointed. Here in this place there is a doctor in the Government pilgrims' hospital, there is another practitioner here who is not allowed in the railway settlement. The two together with the Railway Medical Officer can constitute a panel to whom all cases of medical certificates may be sent.

K-4905. You say that " Railway Doctors being Railway servants are liable to be easily influenced by indirect official pressure " and so on. Can you give instances ?—Yes, I can if required. It is true.

K-4906. *Mr. Gregory* : In your memorandum dealing with recruitment you say that " every year covenanted drivers are being appointed excluding Indians for driving Mail or Passenger trains on the main line." Is it not a fact that during the last 10 years no men have been covenanted from England ?—May be, but we are referring to the policy of the administration in shutting out Indians from these higher posts. There has been no change at all in that policy.

K-4907. With regard to contract work you refer to Mr. Jarrad's letter to the Chief Mechanical Engineer copy of which was sent to you. Why have you not quoted the letter in full ?—I thought it unnecessary.

K-4908. You say that the Agent held out a threat. I have a copy of the letter here. It is divided into three portions. The first is a reply to the machine shop workers. The second says that if the workmen still persist in their *satyagraha* " the Administration will have no option but to invoke the machinery provided by the Government of India for dealing with a situation of this description, namely a Court of Enquiry under the terms of the Trade Disputes Act." Do you think that a Court of Enquiry will not be in the interests of the Union ?—Of course it will be in the interests of the workers.

K-4909. The third part of the letter says :—

“ It would then be advisable for the Administration to consider including in the terms of reference for the Court of Enquiry, an investigation and report on (a) the circumstances attributed to the men refusing to work without previous warning of their intention, and refusing to work while their representation subsequently received was under consideration, and (b) in view of recurring labour troubles and riots at Khargpur which appear from recent events to constitute a menace to public peace within the settlement, whether it is desirable to reduce the work done in Khargpur Workshops to a minimum, and distribute the balance of work, elsewhere.”

The only portion which has been construed by you as a threat is where the Agent speaks of the terms of reference to a Court of Enquiry. Is that not so ? I suppose you are referring to this letter and none else ?—Yes, I am referring to that letter.

K-4910. In your memorandum you quote some paragraphs from Mr. Hazeltine's report which was made in 1925. Are the conditions now the same as they were in 1925 ? Have there not been certain changes made in the method of fixing rates and so on ?—There have been certain changes no doubt, but they have been for the worse.

K-4911. In what respects have they been for the worse ?—When they find that a man is receiving higher rates they try to reduce it. They calculate the time required for an article in this way. Early in the morning the foreman, the production engineer and the *mistri* go to the machine and work it. One oils the machine, the other puts coal in it and the third works it as fast as possible. If the article is finished in half an hour, they note the time and fix the rates accordingly. But how can you expect the workman to do such work throughout the day ? That is not a correct way of fixing the wages for piece-work.

K-4912. *Mr. Cliff* : Is the price fixed in conjunction with the representatives of the union ?—No.

K-4913. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You say here that tests have been speeded up to such an extent that it is difficult for men to earn a reasonable wage. On the other hand some time back you said that the men earned high wages and consequently they were reduced and that certain quantity of work was carried over to the next week or month ?—This is one way of doing it ; that is another way of doing it. There are different ways of reducing the labourer's wages.

K-4914. *Mr. Gregory* : In your memorandum you refer to cases of eviction of railway employees under certain provisions of the Railway Act. Is it not a fact that there was no case of eviction under the Act during the last strike ?—(*Mr. Rao*) : At Danton, for example, some of the menials went on strike and the Traffic Inspector of that place went to drive them out of their houses.

K-4915. But that was not under the Railway Act ?—He brought indirect pressure to bear upon the men to make them go out.

K-4916. Was it during the strike ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : I do not remember whether it was during the strike, but the administration brings indirect pressure to bear upon the strikers in this way also.

K-4917. In the case of Mr. Sinha you said that he was discharged for not vacating the quarters. Is it not a fact that Mr. Sinha was asked to vacate the quarters, but he complained that he could not get other quarters. As a result he was transferred to another station where quarters were available and he refused to go ?—The first charge against him was that he occupied the quarters by force. Then it was brought to the notice of the authorities that it was not true. Then the Train Examiner said that the house should be given to another man. But he did not vacate the house as no other house was available to him. He was kept under suspension for some time on that ground and later on he was discharged.

K-4918. But was he transferred to a place where there were quarters available for him but he refused to go ?—I know the whole case. The final report was that the man was kept under suspension and discharged.

K-4919. In your memorandum you say that “ the Railway should, as a rule, give full facilities for recovery of dues through salary bills towards any benefit institution started by the Union for the benefit of the employees.” Do you not have this facility now in connection with the death benefit scheme of your Union ?—We have not that facility for the workshop employees whose pay is drawn on the paysheet and not on salary bills.

K-4920. Have you made representations to the Agent in regard to this question ?—Yes, more than once.

K-4921. But why have you not mentioned the facility that you are already given under the head of “ Co-operation ” ? Is not your statement incomplete and inaccurate without this ?—We have not mentioned so many things which we have got from the Railway such as the Institute, quarters and so on. We have pointed out what we need badly.

K-4922. In your memorandum you say that the Railway employs contract labour for certain purposes as a sort “ of reserve for black-legging during the strike.” But was it not a fact that during the last strike about 2,000 of your men in the shops who were called out by the Union and who were unable to work on account of intimidation, freely gave their assistance to the railway administration in keeping the line open during the strike ?—They were not 2,000 but only 400 to 500 who formed a gang under the guidance of a man who wanted to get some reward from the administration.

K-4923. My point is : if the Railway can get that assistance from their own men why should they appoint contractors and pay them all the time on the off chance of their assistance being necessary when there is a strike ?—The administration cannot rely on their men coming in always. For instance, they could not do the same thing in the case of the lock-out. During the last strike Messrs. Bird and Company supplied the coolies to work in Shalimar. That is a firm specially established for the purpose of helping the administration in times of strikes.

K-4924. *Mr. Chatterjee* : In your memorandum you quote various instances of men who have reached the low maximum of their grade very early in their service and remained stagnant there for long periods ranging from 4 to 10 years. Have you any suggestion to make with regard to these men ?—First of all there should be a greater number of posts in the higher grades to which these men in the lower grades may be appointed. If that is not possible, a time-scale may be introduced as in the case of the Royal Mail Service and Government servants, so that these men may be sure of at least 20 increments and a decent maximum. Besides these two there is another way of helping these men and keeping them contented. There is a provision in the Fundamental Rules by which a personal allowance may be given to any officer who has reached the maximum of his grade and remained stagnant there for a certain number of years. I have never seen it applied in the case of clerks and lower grade men. I shall be glad if a personal allowance is given as a matter of course to such men till a satisfactory time-scale is introduced.

K-4925. Have you any complaints to make with regard to fines and debits ?—Yes. Very heavy fines are inflicted especially in the traffic department. Station Masters are debited with heavy sums even for trivial faults. If a small consignment is damaged by rats or in any other way for which the Station Master cannot be held responsible he and the goods clerk are debited with the cost of the damaged articles. In the traffic department if a man does not submit his “ blank card statement ” even though he has collected the money and credited it to the proper account he is debited with the cost of all the tickets issued that day. (*Mr. Somayajulu*) : I have one case of an Assistant Station Master who has been debited with Rs. 200 for no fault of his own. The Assistant Station Master of Kantai Road sent a cash bag to the cash office. When the cash bag was opened at the cash office there was a shortage of Rs. 200 and immediately the man was debited with Rs. 200 without asking for explanation. But actually the cash remittance note gave all the particulars and even after full explanation was given the debit has not been made good.

K-4926. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Did he appeal to the superior officers ?—Yes, the appeal has not been disposed of.

K-4927. *Mr. Chatterjee* : In the matter of educational facilities do you want more schools to be opened, or do you want more accommodation in the existing schools so that more children may be admitted ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : We want more schools to be opened at Khargpur.

K-4928. The European and Anglo-Indian employees are granted a sort of subsidy to educate their children at the hill schools. Are you given any such subsidy when you have to send your children elsewhere for education ?—No such thing is given to Indian employees.

K-4929. With regard to grant of leave to the railway employees the Agent stated at Calcutta that the employees of the Bengal Nagpur Railway got the leave that was due to them without any difficulty. Have you any difficulty in the matter of getting leave ?—Sanction of leave depends on the discretion of the individual officer under whom the employee is serving. Some officers do not sanction leave and even if they sanction leave his pay is reduced in order to pay the substitute. In the traffic department if a

man applies for leave his name is registered and he has to wait for his turn which will come two or three or four months hence. We cannot get leave when we require it even in an emergency. All this is due to the fact that the Railway has no leave reserve except in the traffic department.

K-4930. With regard to the re-testing of eye-sight for the train passing men every two or three years have you any idea of the number of men who pass the examination ?—(*Mr. Somayajulu*) : About 90 per cent. of the candidates pass the examination.

K-4931. When you are on the line, if you report sick when do you get medical assistance. Do you get it immediately ?—We do not get medical attendance the same day. The medical officer attends a day or two later according to his convenience.

K-4932. Suppose there was an emergent case ?—(*Mr. Muttu*) : Urgent cases are taken to the Khargpur hospital. There is a relieving doctor at the headquarters stations. As soon as he gets a wire from a station on the line he proceeds to see the patient. For instance the relieving doctor at Khargpur has a jurisdiction extending over 80 to 90 miles. If he gets more than one call a day he cannot attend to them at the same time. If he gets two or three calls at three different places far apart from one another he cannot attend to them the same day. His jurisdiction should be reduced. Besides he should be given better conveyance facilities. At present he has to use only the ordinary trains. He cannot carry out his duties satisfactorily if he has to wait for ordinary trains. He should be given a motor trolley to go from place to place as his business requires it.

K-4933. Are there any lady doctors to attend on Indian patients ?—There are no lady doctors at all. Since the maternity ward was opened by a contractor there is one nurse in that hospital about whose qualifications I do not know. If any one on the line falls sick she cannot attend. There is one nurse sanctioned for the north dispensary but her services are utilized in the main hospital only.

K-4934. In your memorandum you refer to the difficulties of train passing men at Howrah and Khargpur, who have to perform 12 hours' night duty. How many trains do they pass in the night ?—(*Mr. Somayajulu*) : About 15 trains from 18 hours to 6 hours, that is more than one train in an hour. In addition to that they have to book luggages and passengers. At a few stations there are coaching clerks working for a limited period, but at almost all the stations the Assistant Station Master alone has to do this single-handed. He has to do this for 10 or 15 years before he becomes a Station Master.

K-4935. Did your Union ask the Agent to appoint additional staff for these stations ?—We have asked several times without any effect.

K-4936. With regard to these train controllers, are they recruited from outside or are they promoted from the ranks of train passing men ?—They are all outsiders recruited direct for these posts. They are more or less prize posts for men who are thought to be loyal to the administration. Most of them are Anglo-Indians and a few are Indians.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## (RAILWAYS)

## Eighty-Sixth Meeting.

TRICHINOPOLY.

Thursday, 27th February, 1930.

PRESENT :

Sir VICTOR SASSOON, Bart (*Presiding*).

Miss B. M. LE POER POWER.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Lieut.-Colonel A. J. H. RUSSELL,  
C.B.E., I.M.S. (*Medical Asses-  
sor*).

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E. }

Mr. B. SHIVA RAO, M.A. }

*Assistant Commissioner.*Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S., *Joint Secretary*.

**A. GOPAL, S. JOSEPH, MUTU KRISHNAN, KRISHNAN, S. RAMASWAMI**, workers in the Golden Rock Workshops of the South Indian Railway Company.

K-4937. *Sir Victor Sassoon* : What work do you do and how long have you been here ?—(*Mr. Gopal*) : I work in the machine shop and I have been here 16 years. I am married ; I have two children, a boy and a girl. I am paid Rs. 3-12-0 a day. (*Mr. Joseph*) : I work in the paint shop. I have been doing that work for 20 years. I am married and have two sons and a daughter ; my pay is Rs. 1-8-0 a day. (*Mr. Mutu Krishnan*) : I work in the boiler shop. I have been doing that work for 11 years. I receive Rs. 1-4-0 a day. I had two children but they both died within the last six months. (*Mr. Krishnan*) : I work in the saw-mill and am paid Rs. 1-10-0 a day. I was a temporary workman here for 8 years, but during 1½ years I have been a permanent worker here. As a temporary workman I was getting Rs. 2-12-0 a day, but I am getting Rs. 1-10-0 as a permanent workman. I was a carpenter first but now I am in the saw-mill. They pay carpenters Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 2-12-0. They transferred me from the carpenter's shop to the saw-mill. I prefer this because this is permanent. Rs. 2-4-0 is the maximum pay in the saw-mill, and I can rise to that amount. If I could get a proper recommendation I could become a permanent carpenter. I am not drawing a bonus. (*Mr. Ramaswami*) : I am in the blacksmith's shop and receive Rs. 1-6-0 a day. I was for 20 years in the Negapatam workshop. I was wounded and was absent for 6 days ; after that I was turned out of the workshop. Then I was out of employment for a few months. The accident disabled me

for a few days and I went to my mother-in-law's place. I stayed away for 6 months and then I came back. Then I went to the other workshop and was there for 7½ years after that. I have been here now 5 months. I have been transferred here from Podanur. I am a blacksmith.

We have all of us come from Negapatam or Podanur. We only knew this morning that the Labour Commission was coming here. Some of the clerks told us that a few European visitors were coming. We only now know that you have come to enquire into our difficulties, and do us some good. There is more sickness here than at Negapatam; dysentery is a common ailment. We find the wages are not enough and we experience great difficulty in obtaining leave. Some body died in the next house; I wanted a day's casual leave but they would not give it to me. The cost of living is higher here than at Negapatam and Podanur, and generally speaking we had greater facilities at Podanur and Negapatam because we could live in the villages round about. Here we have to leave our village life. It is hotter here than either at Podanur or Negapatam. We are afraid to go to the management and complain because we have had experience before that if one man comes forward and puts forward the difficulties of the rest to the employer he is dismissed. So we have come to the conclusion that the safest thing to do is to say nothing; after the collapse of the last strike any suggestion of a Union involves dismissal. Before we get permanent jobs we have to sign an agreement; it is stated in the agreement that we shall not join a Union and we must not get into debt. The agreement is both in English and Tamil. We had to sign this agreement before taking up permanent jobs. Some of us do not agree that there is any definite agreement that we shall not join a union, but there are so many conditions by which we are bound that we feel that joining a union would involve us in trouble. (*Mr. Joseph*): The agreement is only in English; it is not in Tamil. We have signed it but we do not quite know what we have signed. We know there are several conditions. When we had a union we used to have men in the shops to meet the Manager and other officers but we have nothing of that kind now. Now that the union is gone everything is gone, and we are so frightened we dare not do anything. If a man is dismissed he can write 7 or 8 times to the Manager, but he never gets a reply. If a man is dismissed he cannot go and talk to an officer. We all five live in houses built by the Company. Three of us pay Rs. 3 each; one of us pays Rs. 2 and another pays Rs. 5. We can get houses from As. 4 to As. 8.

K-4938. *Mr. Cliff*: Could you get houses as good as the houses that you are living in at the same rent as you are now paying?—It is all stone built and there is not enough accommodation; there are 5 or 6 people in one room 12 ft. × 12 ft. I am new to this place and I am speaking of my condition in Podanur and Negapatam. (*Mr. Gopal*): We live in "D" type houses. (*Mr. Joseph*): I have my father, mother, sister, brother, besides my wife and children; they have all come here from Negapatam.

K-4939. *Sir Victor Sassoon*: Why do you not leave your father and mother in the village?—They are very old and I have to look after them. Krishnan has a bit of land in Travancore State, but the rest of us have no land.



K-4940. *Mr. Cliff* : How do you spend your Sundays ?—(*Mr. Joseph*) : We wash our clothes, buy provisions and generally look to the family requirements on Sundays. We prefer to go into the town, which is four miles away, because things are much cheaper there than in the local bazaar. We have no time to go to bazaar on Saturdays ; we can only go on Sundays.

K-4941. Do you walk or ride ?—We walk both ways.

K-4942. Is there no motor bus running to this Estate ?—We cannot afford it ; we go in the morning and buy everything and come back in the evening. We asked for a free pass on the train but they would not give it to us. If the men come two or three minutes late the card is punched in the machine ; if the man is late he loses an hour's wages. The whistle goes at 11-30. When the men come in to punch their cards it takes 10 or 15 minutes for the whole process to be completed. About 200 men clock in ; it can be done with difficulty in about 10 minutes. Those who live in the colony go home for food in the middle of the day but those who live outside bring cold rice in the morning. About 2,000 men live in the colony and about 2,000 come from outside. We have to eat our food under the trees. There is no tiffin shed. The people who have their mid-day meal outside bring water with them. During working hours there is no difficulty in getting water to drink, but during the midday interval of 1½ hours the people, who come from outside, have to bring their food and water with them and eat it under the trees. In the hot weather the water is so hot that we cannot drink it. There are two schools ; they are both full. We should like to have educational facilities ; some of us cannot send our children to school because the schools are full. I am not speaking of the men living outside ; we are only speaking for the men living in the Railway colony. There are not enough schools for the children of those men ; the schools are so full that there are not enough benches for the children and the children have to sit on the floor. The money for the school is deducted from our wages. It comes to As. 2, As. 4 or As. 8 ; the amount depends upon the class of the parent of the children. Schooling is not free. In the houses the great pest is bugs ; that is why we should prefer not to have houses in lines. Last month we had a free supply of water, but now, they have reduced the quantity supplied so that there is now some difficulty ; they have screwed up the taps so that the water comes out in a very thin stream. The water is available from 5 to 7 in the morning and from 11-30 to 1 ; and 4 to 7 o'clock in the afternoon. In between those periods the water is cut off. We have no trained *dais* ; we must either send our women to the hospital or get some one from outside. We would prefer to send them to the hospital rather than have an ordinary *dai*, but there are no facilities for that in the Railway hospital. Since the union went under we have heard nothing of a welfare committee. As far as we know there is no welfare committee. We ask for three days' leave in a month in case of emergency. We do not want to be paid for the three days' leave ; we just want to be allowed to go away for three days without pay in case of an emergency. We also want a provident fund. We want you to establish a union for us. If there is a death in the family and we apply for leave we do not get it until the next day.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## (RAILWAYS)

## Eighty-Ninth Meeting.

(PANEL NO. 1.)

MADRAS.

Monday, 3rd March, 1930.

PRESENT :

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E. (*Presiding*).  
 Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.  
 Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C., M.I.C.E.  
 Mr. R. SREENIVASALU.  
 Mr. A. DIBDIN, *Joint Secretary*.

Lieut.-Colonel A. J. H. RUSSELL,  
 C.B.E., I.M.S. (*Medical Assessor*).  
 } *Assistant Commissioners.*

Mr. F. B. WATHEN, Agent, Mr. C. C. FINK, Chief Auditor and Accountant, Mr. H. D. SINCLAIR, Chief Transportation Superintendent and Traffic Manager, Mr. R. D. THOMPSON, Chief Mechanical Engineer, Mr. J. A. CRUICKSHANK, Chief Medical Officer, Mr. G. CHARLTON, Deputy Agent, Mr. W. E. MARSH, Press Superintendent, and Mr. N. GRAYSON, Architect, representing the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway, Madras.

K-4943. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is your experience ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : I have had nearly 32 years experience, chiefly in the Traffic Department of the Railway ; I was General Traffic Manager from 1916 till I was appointed permanent Agent in 1928. Previous to that I acted as Agent on one occasion. I was four years on the Eastern Bengal Railway before I came here. (*Mr. Thompson*) : I have had 26 years' experience as Locomotive Officer of this Railway in the Traffic Department. (*Mr. Fink*) : I have had 28 years' experience in the Government of India Accounts Service ; I retired as acting Accountant General. I have been five years with this Railway Company. (*Major Cruickshank*) : I have been five years on this Railway ; previous to that I was in Government service, in the Indian Medical Service. (*Mr. Charlton*) : I have had nearly 10 years' service on this Railway ; previous to that I was for about 12 years on railways in England.

K-4944. Your Railway is State-owned but managed by a Company ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : Yes.

K-4945. Your mileage is 3,121 ?—Yes.

K-4946. Your Railway is divided into districts ?—Yes, 5 transport and running districts and 8 engineering districts. We are just reorganizing the engineering districts. There are 5 big districts, of which 2 are broad and 3 are metre gauge.

K-4947. What is the total number of your staff earning less than Rs. 250 a month ? We have a figure from the Railway Board which does not agree with the figure which you have given us ?—I will give you that information.

K-4948. You say your temporary hands are not included in the 47,000 ?—They are not.

K-4949. How many would there be of them ?—6,000 or 7,000 I should think ; we are gradually dispensing with them as the construction closes.

K-4950. How many contractor's men have you working on the line at present ?—I have no idea. My engineers could give you an idea.

K-4951. Do you make any provision for housing, water supply, conservancy or sanitation for contract or labour ?—I should not myself take steps of that kind on a constructional line with regard to sanitation ; my officers would do that.

K-4952. Would it be possible to insert a fair wages clause into these public contracts ?—I think it would be very difficult to check whether effect was being given to a fair wages clause.

K-4953. Who is responsible for claims under the Workmen's Compensation Act in respect of contractor labour ?—The contractor pays the compensation ; we are not responsible.

K-4954. Do you see that he does pay ?—I do not think we accept any responsibility with regard to that.

K-4955. Apparently it is immaterial to you what rate of wages the contractor pays or what he does with his labour ?—He is a responsible person ; our contracts are not made without enquiry and investigation as to rates. It is rather a difficult question to answer without a good deal of thought.

K-4956. How many of your workers are drawing less than Rs. 30 a month ?—34,912.

K-4957. How many are drawing less than Rs. 20 a month ?—19,777.

K-4958. That includes the gangmen along the line ?—Yes.

K-4959. Has the Railway Board made any suggestions for the improvement of your labour conditions which you have refused to give effect to ?—I cannot recollect one to which I have not given effect. We generally follow the lead of the Railway Board.

K-4960. The Railway Board empower the Agents of State-managed Railways to revise the pay of the subordinate staff, provided no such revision costs more than Rs. 25,000 a year ?—My powers are similar ; otherwise I have to provide for it in the budget and get special sanction.

K-4961. Do you then do that apart from the ordinary budget ?—Yes.

K-4962. Nearly all your recruiting is done locally here ?—Yes ; as far as I know practically all our labour is obtained on the spot. The power to recruit is delegated to 6 or 7 departments ; the Agency does no recruiting except the confirmation of all higher appointments.

K-4963. Who does the actual recruiting in the workshops ?—(*Mr. Thompson*) : That is done by the Works Managers.

K-4964. Not by the Foremen ?—No, not necessarily. The Works Manager sees the applicants first and then they are sent into the shops for test by the Foreman.

K-4965. Who is responsible for recruitment in the Transportation and Traffic Departments ?—(*Mr. Sinclair*) : The District Officers are responsible. The District Officer delegates his powers, as far as appointments of menials are concerned, to Traffic Inspectors, and every appointment that is made by a Traffic Inspector has to be confirmed by the District Officer.

K-4966. What is done on the engineering side ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : The gangs are recruited by the Permanent Way Inspector, subject to confirmation by the District Engineer.

K-4967. Have you ever had any instances brought to your notice of bribery in connection with appointments ?—Years ago, when I was District Traffic Superintendent, a clerk was accused of taking bribes ; that was in 1909 or 1910.

K-4968. Have any of you had experience of officers being guilty of taking bribes ?—Not officers.

K-4969. I mean the authority who is responsible for employing labour ?—The clerk to whom I have just referred was not responsible in any way. The case I have mentioned is the only case I can think of in which a man was accused of having taken bribes.

K-4970. *Mr. Cliff* : Are the lower grades of operating staff, including the brakemen, appointed by the District Officers in that grade ?—The brakemen would be appointed by the District Officers.

K-4971. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Do you find your apprentices leaving you before they have completed their five years' apprenticeship in order to get better jobs elsewhere ?—(*Mr. Thompson*) : No, that is not our general experience.

K-4972. Do you always find jobs for your apprentices ?—We do.

K-4973. You say that every employee has access to the head of the department ; what does that mean in actual practice ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : In actual practice he can submit an appeal through the District Officer to the head of the department. If he asked to see the head of the department he would see him in the presence of his District Officer. (*Mr. Sinclair*) : If he asks for a personal interview he will always get one. I have never refused an interview to the man who wanted it.

K-4974. You say in your memorandum that all disciplinary powers are vested in the respective officers. Who are they ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : The respective officers are the officers under whom the staff work.

K-4975. Who have the power to fine and keep back increments ?—It depends on the grade of the staff. (*Mr. Thompson*) : In the shops the Works Manager has to sanction every punishment.

K-4976. *Mr. Cliff* : Does that mean that the punishment does not actually operate until sanctioned ?—In the workshops that is so.

K-4977. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What happens along the line ?—(*Mr. Sinclair*) : In the Transportation Department every punishment has to be sanctioned by the District Officer. (*Mr. Grayson*) : It is the same in the Engineering Department.

K-4978. *Mr. Cliff* : Can any one below the District Officer suspend ?—(*Mr. Sinclair*) : No. (*Mr. Wathen*) : If a man in charge of a train was drunk, the Traffic Inspector could put him off duty having regard to the safety of the public ; in those circumstances, of course, the senior subordinate must act.

K-4979. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You say that District Officers are empowered to serve a month's notice ?—(*Mr. Sinclair*) : No District Officer in the Transportation Department can dismiss a man ; dismissals can only be done through the head of a department, who can discharge a man of not more than five years' service.

K-4980. Have you any standing rules with regard to dismissals and suspensions ?—Yes.

K-4981. May we have a copy of those rules ?—Yes. (*Mr. Wathen*) : The Circular which the Railway have just issued has been sent to my Home Board for their approval ; the final approval of the Board has not yet been given. In practice we have applied those rules for years.

K-4982. If the District Officer wants to discharge any body, he can give him a month's notice or he can dismiss him with a month's pay ?—Yes, but only staff of less than 5 years' service.

K-4983. Then the man has a right to appeal ?—Yes.

K-4984. That right to appeal expires in a month ?—Yes, it expires, but we have been very liberal about appeals.

K-4985. If a man is given a month's notice and he works out his month's notice hoping he may be reinstated, or at least not dismissed, and then at the end of his month's notice he is in fact dismissed, he has lost his right of appeal, has he not ?—No.

K-4986. Why not ?—(*Mr. Sinclair*) : A man may appeal at any time ; we have not limited a man so far as his appeal is concerned.

K-4987. You may have done that out of the kindness of your heart, but I want to know what the rules are ?—(*Mr. Charlton*) : In practice the staff know that although time may have passed, they have the right of appeal to the superior officer.

K-4988. You have never rejected an appeal from a member of the staff on the ground that it was out of date ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : Yes, I have had appeals three years old.

K-4989. But in the ordinary case of a man appealing against the decision of a senior officer, you have never rejected it on the ground that it was 2 or 3 months' old ?—No.

K-4990. Have you rejected an appeal on the ground that it was couched in language which was not in your opinion proper language ?—Yes, I

have sometimes rejected appeals of that kind, but it is very exceptional. In those cases normally an appeal is re-written.

K-4991. If you adopt the new Railway rules any man whom it is proposed to dismiss or discharge will have a charge sheet handed to him ?—Yes.

K-4992. Then he will be given so many days within which to reply to that charge ?—Yes, that is covered by our rules.

K-4993. Will you have any objection to a trade union helping him to frame his statement of the case ?—I cannot object to any one helping him ; that is his business.

K-4994. How many actual appeals have come to you as Agent in the course of a year ?—We have no statistics, but I find that in 1929 there were 185 appeals from the Transportation Department, which came up to the head of a department. I think you may take it that most of them came to me. I will try to let you know the exact number that came to me. Nine were reversed by the head of the department and one by the Agent.

K-4995. Are those discharges or dismissals ?—They might be anything ; some of them may be with regard to gratuities. In the mechanical shops there were 20 appeals in 1929, of which 4 were reversed by the head of the department.

K-4996. Would these appeals come up after the men had been actually dismissed ?—Yes.

K-4997. Are you making any provision in the new rules for the appeal being made before the actual dismissal or discharge takes place ?—No, that is not specially provided for ; it is a point which has not been brought to my notice. (*Mr. Charlton*) : In practice, the man does not appeal until he knows the decision. (*Mr. Wathen*) : We have forms which are handed to them telling them what they are charged with and asking for an explanation.

K-4998. May we have copies of those forms ?—Yes.

K-4999. From your memorandum I see there are two service agreements, one for monthly rated hands and one for daily rated hands. In actual practice, what is the difference between the two ?—I do not know whether there is a difference. We build quarters for monthly paid men and compel them to live in those quarters, whereas we should not so compel a daily paid man.

K-5000. Apparently you give copies of the general rules to the monthly paid men, but not to the daily rated men. Do you expect the daily rated men to be cognizant of the rules ?—These agreements are now under revision. The general rules generally apply to the working of trains and do not affect the daily rated men in the workshops.

K-5001. Why are you revising the agreement ?—(*Mr. Charlton*) : One of the reasons is that the Provident Fund Act requires a certain revision of our agreements.

K-5002. Do you not propose to alter any of the other terms ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : We have it under consideration.

K-5003. You cannot go further than that at the moment ?—No.

K-5004. Item No. 9 of the service agreement says : " I clearly understand that the authority which appoints me has the power to dismiss me ". Who is the authority that appoints him ?—As a rule, the District Officer, or the head of the department in the case of a more senior appointment. That is a legal requirement which probably emanated from our lawyers. Of course I must have the power to dispense with the service of any man.

K-5005. Who controls leave ?—The District Officer normally.

K-5006. In your memorandum you say that leave is controlled by the Foreman ?—That is in the workshops.

K-5007. Do you give the Foremen power to give leave in the Mechanical Department ?—(*Mr. Thompson*) : He does give leave, but it is finally sanctioned by the Works Manager.

K-5008. You say : " At Arkonam the assistant workshop foreman is authorised to grant leave with pay to his workshop staff " ?—The shop Foreman could certainly give the workmen a few days' leave.

K-5009. With pay ?—No ; he gives him leave under the rules. (*Mr. Wathen*) : If he is entitled to it, he is authorized to grant it in an emergency. A Station Master can grant a man leave if he wants to get away in a hurry.

K-5010. You tell us the assistant workshop Foreman has the right to grant leave ?—Yes.

K-5011. Does he do so in actual practice ?—Yes.

K-5012. He has also the right to refuse leave ?—I take it he has a right to say it is not convenient. If a man pressed for leave and could not get it from his shop Foreman he would go to his Works Manager at once and ask for leave.

K-5013. That might create ill-feeling between him and his Foreman ?—It might ; the granting of leave has to be done more or less with reference to the work which is to be done.

K-5014. Again you say : " regular attendance will be considered to include a total absence of not more than 40 days in a calendar year ". In the 365 days in the year there are 52 Sundays, which reduces the number to 313 days. In addition to that apparently the man can be absent for 40 days and still be considered as having been in regular attendance ?—(*Mr. Thompson*) : That is so as far as the workshop is concerned.

K-5015. At what stage do you dismiss a man for being irregular in attendance, over-staying leave or being absent ?—If a man asks for leave it is granted as a rule.

K-5016. That is, 14 days' with pay ?—Yes. Beyond that if he says he wants 3 days' leave he gets it. If a man simply absents himself without permission, stays away for 30 days, we do not know where he is and he has not written to us, we assume that he has absconded ; we give him 30 days.

K-5017. But you say here 40 days ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : The average man who stays away 30 days would probably say he was going to stay away for that time.

K-5018. If he is in the workshop for a year apparently he can earn leave for 15 days ?—Yes, he is allowed 15 days with pay ; he is allowed 12 days' holidays with pay in addition ; he is also allowed two days' leave with pay on the King's Birthday and Empire Day ; that means that he is allowed 29 days in a year leave with pay. A month's regular attendance earns him a day's holiday which comes to 12 days a year.

K-5019. Do you mean he has to be there a month without being absent in order to earn his holiday ?—Yes ; if he has attended regularly for 7 months he gets 7 days' holiday.

K-5020. You also pay him a bonus for regular attendance ?—Yes, that is for the coolie class.

K-5021. You pay coolies, who attend regularly, an anna a day, and in addition to ordinary pay you give them a day per full month ?—It amounts to that. Of course absence is different from leave. When we talk of dismissing a man after he had been absent for 30 days we mean that he stays away for 30 days and we do not know where he is.

K-5022. *Mr. Cliff* : With regard to training, you say : " A point of interest to which attention is drawn, is the extent to which this Railway avails itself of the facilities provided by the Government in the areas served by it ". Does that apply only to the Mechanical Department ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : We give passes to the sons and daughters of Railway employees to enable them to obtain technical training at technical colleges and that sort of thing.

K-5023. Will you send us information as to the number of apprentices you had in the Mechanical Department in 1929 ?—Yes.

K-5024. Are all of these people living in Madras City, or do they have to travel to Madras in order to get this education ?—I should say most of these people are in Madras City.

K-5025. Is this particular branch of education under review ?—I do not think it is. Railways are a Central subject and education is a Provincial (transferred) subject.

K-5026. You say that the majority of employees are made compulsory subscribers to the Provident Fund. Where is the line drawn ?—Under Rs. 15. From Rs. 15 to Rs. 30 it is optional, while above Rs. 30 it is compulsory.

K-5027. Does a man have to complete a certain length of service before he can join ?—No ; a man, whose pay is sufficient, is entitled to join at once, except in the case of daily rated men who are only eligible to join after three years' continuous service. A large number of those with regard to whom it is optional have in fact joined.

K-5028. It goes on to say that " definite temporary relief is provided to those who become unemployed ". What form does that temporary relief take ?—(*Mr. Charlton*) : I think what is referred to is the fact that they are compulsory subscribers to the Provident Fund and that provides temporary relief.

K-5029. With reference to absenteeism in Engineering Department, does that include authorised leave ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : This is absenteeism ; all leave has to be authorized ; it is not leave. We will give you information on that point.



K-5030. Your memorandum says : " the staff are given every opportunity to represent grievances, and appeals receive careful attention " . Does the form of appeal appended to your memorandum as schedule apply to every employee on the Railway ?—Yes.

K-5031. Apparently this is a new form which was issued on the 1st May, 1929. Do you propose to revise this form ?—No. We are revising the rules with regard to dismissals and discharges.

K-5032. Must every appeal be in writing ?—Yes.

K-5033. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Do you hand to every man, who joins the service, a copy of the circular describing his right to appeal ?—*(Mr. Wathen)* : We have not done that. It is a matter to which we could give consideration. I think it would be a good idea and I am prepared to accept that.

K-5034. *Mr. Cliff* : If these are printed in the vernacular, can the employees on the open line in the Engineering Department read them ?—I should say a number could not ; they would have to be explained to the lower paid staff even if they were in the vernacular.

K-5035. In many cases I suppose they have to get some body to write out their appeals for them ?—Yes.

K-5036. It seems to me that your rules as to leave and appeals are framed as though you were dealing with fully educated labourers ?—Yes. It is a sort of custom here to make appeals or applications in writing. Letter-writing is a regular trade in Madras.

K-5037. If every appeal must be in writing, I suppose they have to pay something to write out the appeal ?—Yes, or a friend might do it. I agree with you that there might be a hardship. On the other hand the man can have an interview if he wants one. The problems of language and education are very difficult here. I have just appointed a Personnel Officer and I hope we shall be able to overcome some of these difficulties. I think you will find that the average Madrasi is more educated than the average man in the Punjab or the Central Provinces.

K-5038. With regard to what you say in your memorandum under " extent to which housing is provided " and the figures you give as to the cost of housing, will you tell us how the expenditure contemplated during the next two years is allocated as between grades ?—I will supply that information.

K-5039. You say : " The physical standards required of recruits are now more rigid than a few years ago " ?—*(Major Cruickshank)* : I think the word " rigid " is an unfortunate expression. I do not think they are more rigid than they were. The standards required are very much the same as those required on State railways. We will let you have a statement as to the standards required. The standards are laid down almost entirely with reference to the safety of the travelling public.

K-5040. *Sir Alexander Murray* : During recent years have you deliberately raised your standard in view of the increased number of applicants ?—*(Mr. Wathen)* : No, I should not say so.

K-5041. In your memorandum it is stated that the Railway provident fund provides for both old age and premature retirement. Could you take a year, or whatever is a fair period, and tell us the number of men who have been pensioned and the amount of pension involved ?—Yes.

K-5042. Will you send us reports of the co-operative credit societies referred to in your memorandum ?—Yes.

K-5043. Is your co-operative store functioning properly at the moment ?—It has been in difficulties owing to a bad manager, who bought a lot of unnecessary stock and there was a big depreciation in the value of the goods. We are trying to get it on its legs again, but it is rather difficult.

K-5044. You have referred to the expenditure incurred by the payment of compensation to employees outside the provisions of the Act. What is the number of your employees not included under that Act ?—That is badly worded ; it does not mean employees outside the provisions of the Act ; it means additional payments made outside the provisions of the Act. (*Mr. Charlton*) : Where it says : “ compensation with extent of possible claims ”, it should read “ comparison with extent of possible claims ”.

K-5045. Will you supply us with figures as to partial and total disablement and temporary disablement ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : Probably temporary disablement has been covered by leave.

K-5046. Does your Railway run through Indian States outside British territory ?—Yes, we run through Mysore State, Nizam's territory, and Kolhapur.

K-5047. Have you had any accidents occurring in these Indian States where the Workmen's Compensation Act does not apply ?—I think we apply the Workmen's Compensation Act in these cases. The Workmen's Compensation Act has just been brought in force in Mysore. I do not think that question has ever arisen. We work in a foreign country.

K-5048. You have never taken exception to a claim for workmen's compensation on the ground that the accident happened in territory where the Act did not apply ?—I have not ; we even apply the Act to Portuguese India.

K-5049. *Mr. Cliff* : Do the running staff work only 44 hours a week ?—No, they work more than 44 hours a week. The hours differ so much throughout the system that it would be rather difficult to give them. (*Mr. Sinclair*) : The average hours on the road of the running staff are about 8 to 10, but we sometimes have cases in which they run as much as 12 hours. I have some exceptional cases of 64, 62 and 67 hours in a week.

K-5050. Under “ Transportation ” you say, “ but in the case of the running staff the matter of fixing regulations is still under the consideration of the Railway Board ”. Then above that you say “ others including running staff ”. Are not the words “ others including running staff ” in the wrong place ?—That is possible. We have endeavoured to give effect to the Washington and Geneva Conventions. Where we have long runs on the road we put two crews on.

K-5051. The Railway Board told us they had great difficulty in applying the Washington and Geneva Conventions to running staff?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : I do not think there should be much difficulty in giving effect to the Geneva Convention. With regard to running staff because we give a man 24 hours off at headquarters.

K-5052. You say : “ There has been a general tendency to increase rates of wages since 1920 owing to the higher cost of living since the war ”. Has the cost of living been going up since 1920 ?—No, I imagine the cost of living has not gone up in recent years.

K-5053. Have you been increasing wages very considerably since 1920 ?—Our great increase was in 1921. The rates are set out in our memorandum.

K-5054. Have you been increasing rates very considerably since that time ?—No, not very considerably.

K-5055. The Railway Board speaking of a minimum living wage say they have no doubt that the Agents of railways would be prepared to take all possible measures with a view to improving the rates. What have you been doing to increase your minimum rates of wages since 1921 ?—At present I have got a committee sitting investigating the matter.

K-5056. On what principle is that committee working ?—They are working on the principle of spreading out the grades. Our grades are rather packed together and a man does not get a chance of promotion over a number of years. A man may get two or three promotions and then stop until there is a vacancy in the next grade. We are endeavouring to see whether we cannot reduce the number of grades so as to spread promotion over a greater number of years, possibly increasing the range and increasing the opportunity. Those are really the lines on which I want to work it because we have too many grades for the lower paid staff.

K-5057. Are the peons, Grade F, ranging from Rs. 9½ to Rs. 10½ the lowest grade ?—(*Mr. Charlton*) : Other than in the workshops the lowest grade is Rs. 12. In the workshops the lowest grade is As. 9 a day.

K-5058. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You refer to men coolies being paid As. 7 per day ?—It is obviously a mistake.

K-5059. *Mr. Cliff* : The answer appears to be that the minimum rate outside the workshops is Rs. 12 ?—Yes. (*Mr. Charlton*) : In the workshops it is As. 8 per day, plus a grain compensation of Rs. 1-8-0 per month.

K-5060. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Are you still paying grain compensation ?—Yes.

K-5061. Up and down the line ?—Yes.

K-5062. Since when have you been paying grain compensation ?—Since sometime in the war. (*Mr. Fink*) : We take the cost of the staple grain in each district and if the number of seers per rupee is below a certain number we give the grain compensation.

K-5063. Will you give us a statement about that ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : Yes. The grain compensation allowance is really like pay ; we have considered consolidating it.

K-5064. *Mr. Cliff* : You say : “ the relations between the Railway and the Union have so far been amicable ”. Have there been any relations between your Company and the Union ?—Yes.

K-5065. With regard to the trade Unions you say that the question of the formal recognition is under consideration. Does that mean that they are unofficially recognized but not officially recognized ?—It means that we have dealings with them. We meet the President ; they write to us on certain subjects and we more or less negotiate with them. Although this Union is said to have been in existence for a number of years, since 1919, it was very small to begin with. I think it has been registered for the last  $1\frac{1}{2}$  years, since 1928, under the new Trade Unions Act, and I am dealing with it to a certain extent. I think the word “ recognition ” is liable to be loosely interpreted. It is a question of how far we can go with them. I do not think any actual minute, hour, or day will arise when recognition will be given ; we shall probably go on increasing our dealings with the Union. In their book of rules they provided for a committee which at present would consist of over 300 people, the quorum being 7. In the interests of my staff I feel I have great responsibility in this matter ; I do not think I can put the interests of my staff in the hands of 7 people elected according to methods which I do not think are businesslike. I believe I am correct in saying that normally in trade unions there is a system of balloting, but in this Union on any large question which would have to be decided by the members, there is no provision for a ballot at all. As far as I know there is no election by ballot. Normally speaking, I think that sort of provision is necessary. I hope our difficulties with the Union will decrease as we get definite channels of approach between the Union and ourselves. None of these matters have been settled because we have not at present been able to arrive at a satisfactory basis. Let me make it quite clear that we are not antipathetic to unions in any shape or form. I was to have met Mr. Giri, the President of the Union, on Friday, but other business has detained him at Delhi so that I have not yet had that pleasure ; but our relations with the Union are quite cordial and I am endeavouring to try and work with them. There is a responsibility placed upon me and I am not quite sure whether, under the existing rules and conditions of the Union, it is fair to assume that they actually represent the feelings of the staff or that it is quite clear that the staff have any power to run the Union properly. I am now talking about the general members of the Union. As far as collective bargaining is concerned, I am quite prepared to help it.

K-5066. Are you requiring more of the Union than the Trade Unions Act requires ?—I do not think so. Under the Trade Unions Act seven members can form a Union. I think I am requiring a little more than that in the interests of my staff. May I take one example ; we had a case of a memorial sent to this Royal Commission which has caused a good deal of excitement. We have had appeals against it. It only came out a few days ago and now we are having appeals against it saying it is not representative of the staff. I do not know how many people have seen this memorial, but one or two who have seen it have got very excited about it. In fact I got an appeal on Sunday about it.

K-5067. Is this the one dealing with the Anglo-Indian Association ?—Yes ; I am just quoting that as an example.

K-5068. You say you want the Union to change its rules with regard to balloting ; are you not going beyond the Trade Unions Act ?—Possibly ; but I think all these matters could be a question of negotiation with us as to the lines on which we will deal with the Union.

K-5069. First of all you have a law on the Statute-Book ; secondly you have the Government administering that Act and registering trade unions ; thirdly you have the Railway Board dealing with a federation of these trade unions ?—Yes.

K-5070. Are you requiring more of a union than the law and the Railway Board require ?—I cannot say that ; I do not know what is in the mind of the Railway Board on that subject. I do not think I am requiring a great deal.

K-5071. The Railway Board meet them as at present constituted ?—I meet my Union.

K-5072. There seems to be some little difficulty about this question of formal recognition ?—May I say that formal recognition may be defined by the administration in a quite different way from that in which it may be defined by the Union. If formal recognition were to be given to the Union it might lead to a lot of misunderstanding, because the term might be misinterpreted.

K-5073. *Sir Alexander Murray* : I take it your point is that you are perfectly willing to deal with a properly constituted and properly organized trade Union ?—Yes, I always have been.

K-5074. Apparently there is a difference of opinion as to what is a properly organized and constituted trade union ?—Yes. I would welcome the staff helping themselves ; in fact you will find further on in this memorandum that I have made endeavours with a view to the staff helping themselves by collective bargaining.

K-5075. *Mr. Cliff* : I hear there are two trade unions of Railway employees ?—There are three or four trade unions. I have been asked to recognize 4 different trade unions. They are rather overlapping. One is the Railway Employees Union at Perambur ; that is the big Union. Then there is a Non-workshop Union ; I am not very clear what its constitution is ; I have not got a copy of its rules and I do not know what its membership is. I am not even sure who is the President. Then I have been asked by the National Union of Railwaymen in Bombay to recognize them ; that used to be the Amalgamated Society of Railway Workmen.

K-5076. *Sir Alexander Murray* : I think that is mainly Anglo-Indian ? I do not think they admit that. The fourth one was the Anglo-Indian Association. These are the four who have asked for formal recognition.

K-5077. *Mr. Cliff* : As far as you are concerned, at the moment you are really negotiating with the Trade Union as to the basis of relationship which will obtain between the Union and the Company ?—Yes, we are constantly doing so ; you may take that to be so.

K-5078. Are you prepared to consider favourably the establishment of standing joint machinery ?—I consider I have done that already ; I consider I have given facilities for joint machinery.

K-5079. Was the machinery which is dealt with in your memorandum set up in conjunction with the Trade Union or not ?—That was not done in

conjunction with the Trade Union. You are referring to the staff committees. The staff committees were necessary because of our change of organization ; it was felt that with the longer controls and the greater number of officers at each headquarters, brought about by telephonic communication, as against the old methods, we could control greater areas and we felt that the supervising staff might be kept rather out of touch with the men ; so we followed the lead of other people and we have started staff committees in the Transportation Department.

K-5080. Do then the District and Central staff committees cover all your employees ?—No, not at present ; they cover the Transportation Department only at present.

K-5081. Is it localized at one or two large centres ?—In five districts, yes. There are five committees and the Central committee.

K-5082. Are there new committees to be set up ?—Not at present until we see how these function ; we might extend it to every department eventually, but we are first seeing how these function.

K-5083. How long have they been functioning ?—About 6 or 8 months. They started in October, but we had been working at them sometime before that. They actually came into force in October. They have dealt with supposed individual grievances before the officer concerned.

K-5084. You have had experience since October ; have you any views as to how it is functioning in that short period ?—Yes, I think it is functioning successfully.

K-5085. Do you find that the members of the committee are accepting responsibility ?—I should say so myself, but Mr. Sinclair has actually dealt with it and will be able to give you better information. (*Mr. Sinclair*) : I think they are accepting responsibility.

K-5086. How long do you propose to take before you consider extending these committees to other branches so that all employees are covered ?—I hope to get on with it with the Personnel Officer whom I have appointed ; he took up his appointment on Saturday.

K-5087. Have you considered the possibility of establishing these committees in conjunction with the Union ?—I think these are rather different from other staff committees which have been set up in India in that they are self-elected. Therefore if the Union is representative of the staff, the Union men will be on these committees and will attain their object.

K-5088. If that is right, that they will attain their object indirectly, why not arrange for them to attain their object directly ?—I think it has been done.

K-5089. It is put to us very strongly that as those committees are elected they are a counter to the Union. If one looks at the objects which you set out in your memorandum, they afford a very wide scope if the committees are allowed to function to that extent ; they give a very wide basis of relationship between the work-people and the Agent. Would it not be possible to discuss the matter with the Union so that they may agree with those functions and the method of procedure ?—It might be.

K-5090. I should like an experiment made to see whether these are accepted as the basis of agreement between the Union and the management ?—I think you must appreciate the difficulties I explained to you

about that. Undoubtedly in time to come that may happen but trade unionism in India is a matter of difficulty. As you have pointed out, the workers are illiterate, they have to be trained and we have great responsibility placed on our shoulders to see that the staff get fair treatment. We are using our most earnest endeavours to bring that about the best way. As long as I am satisfied that these people who purport to represent the staff do really represent them I shall be only too happy to help them. I consider I am helping these people.

K-5091. In order to prevent any rivalry between these staff committees and unions, will it be better when you are establishing new staff committees to do so in collaboration with the trade union?—The Union has not asked to be consulted about this; they have been very antipathetic to these committees; apparently they have not seen the advantage of these committees; I may be wrong but as far as I can gather from the attitude of the Union their aim is the Union itself and not so much the advantage of the staff; their point of view is that the Union must be represented and not the staff. I say if the Union is going to be an effective one, it should be the staff and there should be no question between the staff and the Union.

K-5092. We are advised that the unions believe that this is one of a series of attempts to spike their guns. With regard to appeals, have you any objection to a system being established whereby the men may be represented by a union officially at some stage in the appeal?—At some stage when the union and I are able to see eye to eye I may be prepared to consider that; but as I have explained we have a lot of spade work to be done first with the union as I think any expert in trade union matters would be inclined to agree with me.

K-5093. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Can we have a copy of the constitution of your staff committees?—Yes, we will send copies.

K-5094. Has your sanitary department got a special constitution?—Yes, we will send copies of that.

K-5095. *Mr. Joshi* : Is there racial discrimination in your administration either in theory or in practice?—There has been in past generations but I think we have now more or less eliminated it.

K-5096. Since what time?—It has been a process of gradual elimination; I cannot give you the exact date; but we do not admit that there is any racial discrimination now.

K-5097. I will read this passage to you and I would like you to say whether you agree with it or not. "Mr. Hayman, in winding up the debate, pleaded guilty to the charge of racial discrimination in practice in railway workshops and on company-managed railways".—As far as I know, I should say he is not right.

K-5098. In your memorandum you refer to special apprentices in a particular class; how many of those apprentices are Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians?—I cannot say. We will send that information.

K-5099. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Will you send us full particulars not only of the special class but of the classes "A", "B" and "C" in addition?—Yes.

K-5100. *Mr. Joshi* : With regard to housing, does an Indian Guard and a European Guard get the same superficial area ?—It depends entirely on the pay of the Guard.

K-5101. If you take an Indian getting Rs. 100 a month and an Anglo-Indian getting Rs. 100 a month can you say that the superficial area of their houses is the same ?—I cannot. I can hand in plans of all quarters if that will meet your question.

K-5102. I quite appreciate that you have different types of quarters ; I am asking about the superficial area of the building ?—To the best of my knowledge it is the same for the same grade.

K-5103. Can you make a definite statement ?—No, I cannot unless I investigate that point most carefully. Of course, Mr. Hayman may define racial discrimination in a different way from the way in which you and I may define it. Mr. Sinclair now tells me that if there is a quarter vacant he gives the quarter to the next man on the list whether he is an Indian or an Anglo-Indian ; he does not distinguish. I had not realised he had gone as far as that because I thought Indian gentlemen required different accommodation from Anglo-Indians.

K-5104. According to your own statement different quarters are given to Indians, Europeans and Anglo-Indians ?—Quarters are not built in a day ; some of these quarters are many years old. In the year 1880 or 1890 there was undoubtedly very strong racial discrimination with regard to the quarters required for the different classes. I say I am making no racial discrimination as far as it lies in my power.

K-5105. Why do you not allow employees drawing less than Rs. 15 a month to come within the provident fund ?—Our provident fund is the Government fund and we are bound by the rules of the Government of India ; it is not a company's fund at all.

K-5106. If the Government of India consults you, will you have any objection to the Government of India changing the rule ?—That is a matter I should have to refer to my Board at home ; I did not know there was any idea of changing the rule. I do not think there would be any difficulty in giving effect to a change in the rule.

K-5107. You say that there were two strikes of conservancy sweepers in the Perambur workshops in 1921 and 1926, that increased wages were demanded and that increased wages were granted. Why did you not give those increased wages before the strike ?—I was not Agent at that time and I have no personal knowledge of those strikes. (*Major Cruickshank*) : This is not quite correct. There was one strike in 1916 and one in 1921. They were both before my time and I am afraid I cannot give you very much information about them.

K-5108. In your memorandum you say : “ the passes for the home line are allowed to children's governesses and European and Anglo-Indian nurses in the employment of officers of the railway ”. It appears from that that something like racial discrimination still exists.—(*Mr. Wathen*) : No, there is no racial discrimination there ; an Indian officer could employ an Anglo-Indian nurse.



K-5109. What happens if he employs an Indian nurse?—He gets his pass just the same; the expression "children's governesses" includes them all. I do not think any racial discrimination is intended there.

K-5110. Then it is stated, "occasional cheque passes for short distances may be issued by heads of departments or officers nominated by them to European and Anglo-Indian employees".—That is not racial discrimination. This is to enable them to attend places of worship. Places of worship for Europeans and Anglo-Indians do not exist in some small places whereas the Indian has generally got his place of worship in these small places. It is a very old privilege which is given to a man who is put in a place where there are no means of worship. Indian Christians have the same benefit at places where they cannot get to their churches. Then there is the position with regard to entertainments. For sports or an institute entertainment I would give a pass without much trouble; I do not think there would be any racial discrimination there.

K-5111. Has it ever struck you that the maintenance of these rules in your works causes discontent?—I should say not; I have had no complaint or appeal about that rule that I can recollect and I have never heard of any discontent or trouble with regard to that rule.

K-5112. Have you read the demands made by the Railwaymen's Federation to the Railway Board?—Yes.

K-5113. I have always found that racial discrimination was stated as being one of the grounds of grievance in every strike.—Perhaps we have not experienced it so much in this part of India.

K-5114. Have you read the debates in the Legislative Assembly with regard to the railways?—As far as possible but I cannot remember ever having seen any remark regarding racial discrimination expressed in the Legislative Assembly with regard to the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway.

K-5115. When you import coaches and locomotives from England are they brought out here complete or are the parts imported and assembled here?—We import locomotives in various ways; latterly as an experiment we have brought them out whole and landed them at Madras complete.

K-5116. Have they cost you more?—We are investigating that very point now; I should say there is very little in it. Other factors have also to be considered as to how long the voyage takes and how soon we can get the machinery on the road.

K-5117. Do you get any of your work done through the contractors instead of getting it done in your workshops?—Yes.

K-5118. Why do you do that?—For one thing it is a question of the standardization which has been introduced by the Government of India; that is very necessary. Every railway might construct wagons by its own methods and in its own ways, but owing to the interchange of railway stock over all India All-Indian standards are necessary.

K-5119. Do you remember that a committee was appointed by the Government of India to find out which method was cheaper ; it was the Raven Committee and that committee reported that work done in railway workshops was cheaper than work done by a private company. In view of that finding why do you give contracts to private contractors ?—Railway workshops were constructed for maintenance and repair rather than for construction purposes. Our business is to keep the line running.

K-5120. Why do you supply electric light to highly paid employees and not to the others ?—I do not know whether the lower paid staff would be prepared to pay rent on the fittings. Everyone has to pay rent on the electric fittings. If you were to put electric light into the houses of all your staff where it was available, a large number of the staff would say that they had not asked for it. If a man left his house, the new tenant might say “ he had not asked for the electric light, that he preferred his own light and objected to paying the increased cost ”. It is open to question whether it would be possible to supply every body with electric light. A certain amount of constructional cost would be involved and interest must be earned on the money spent on construction. You cannot put in electric light one day and take it out the next. No representation has been made to me on the subject and I have never even considered it.

K-5121. *Col. Russell* : In the Perambur area what proportion of your staff is housed ?—(*Mr. Thompson*) : I should say about 10 per cent.

K-5122. How many of them have been provided within the last five years ?—We are building quarters now ; during the last two or three years 502 quarters have been built.

K-5123. What do you mean when you say that the company has a consistent policy ?—Our policy now is to construct buildings for a large percentage of the staff. (*Mr. Wathen*) : We propose to build them as they are required ; as you know a large number of Madrasis like to live in their own houses and in their own property.

K-5124. Will you supply us with a list of type plans of your various quarters ?—(Same produced and handed in).

K-5125. Is the Chief Medical Officer satisfied that types are designed with a view to admitting as much light and air as possible ?—(*Major Cruickshank*) : Yes.

K-5126. The Trade Union in their memorandum say that houses even when they are provided are unfit for human habitation. What do you say to that ?—I do not consider they are unfit for human habitation. The lower grade houses are small but through ventilation is provided and they are on the whole much better than the quarters outside in which these people as a rule live.

K-5127. The same memorandum states that on the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway below a certain class the houses do not have provision for water and latrines and they must use the common latrine and common tap. Do you think that is unusual in this country ?—No.

K-5128. This memorandum also suggests that racial discrimination in the matter of housing is going on to appalling extent ; what do you

say about that ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : I should say no. There have been different types for Europeans and Indians from time immemorial in India because the ways of life of these people are quite different. For instance, when an Indian officer in the upper grade occupies a house he wants alterations made and there is racial discrimination in favour of the Indians.

K-5129. The railway memorandum says that the general physique of railway employees is satisfactory ; on the other hand, this memorandum from which I have quoted says that physically no worker or salaried employee of the railway service keeps good health ; his children are always sick.—(*Major Cruickshank*) : I do not consider that to be a correct statement.

K-5730. You prefer the statement of the Railway Board ?—Yes.

K-5131. You have five hospitals ?—Yes.

K-5132. Do you consider you have sufficient number of beds in those hospitals for your seriously sick staff ?—We are still extending the hospital accommodation.

K-5133. You are extending the number of beds ?—Yes ; we have lately got ten beds more than are mentioned in this memorandum.

K-5134. Your policy is to extend it still further ?—Yes.

K-5135. How many Indian beds and how many European beds are available in these hospitals ?—I will send in the numbers.

K-5136. Have you any maternity wards in any of these hospitals ?—No.

K-5137. You do not employ any lady doctor ?—No.

K-5138. Is there any necessity for such an officer ?—Not at the present time.

K-5139. Supposing you had in the Perambur area a lady doctor with a maternity ward, do you think the wives of your employees would use those facilities ?—I think it is possible that they would but personally I think the question of employing district nurses and midwives is more important from the point of view of the staff.—(*Mr. Wathen*) : I have authorized the appointment of a health worker or welfare worker as soon as a lady is trained and I am investigating the question of district nurses or visitors or midwives and anything like that to help the families

K-5140. That is the definite policy of the Railway ?—Yes.

K-5141. What is the number of nurses you have now employed in these five hospitals ?—(*Major Cruickshank*) : Eight.

K-5142. Are they all European or Anglo-Indian ?—No, six of them are Anglo-Indians and two are Indians.

K-5143. You say : “ employees drawing over Rs. 30 per mensem have to pay hospital stoppages for indoor treatment ”. Will you give the Commission a statement showing the amounts of hospital stoppages during the year 1929 ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : Yes.

K-5144. On other railways we have heard complaints with regard to the eye tests to which certain workers have to submit at various intervals in their service. What method do you adopt in examining and re-examining employees in connexion with eyesight?—Do you use the Edridge green test?—(*Major Cruickshank*) : Yes.

K-5145. Have you given up the coloured wool test altogether?—It is sometimes used but very little stress is put on it.

K-5146. Are you satisfied that the employees are fairly treated in regard to these repeated eyesight tests?—Yes.

K-5147. Is any employee ever reduced in grade and salary because it is found that his eyesight has deteriorated within the previous year or years?—It is occasionally so.

K-5148. What number were reduced in grade or salary from this cause during the last two years?—I will send in that information.

K-5149. Do you ever get appeals against the decision of a district medical officer in cases of that kind?—Yes.

K-5150. How are they dealt with?—They are dealt with by me personally.

K-5151. Do you make a personal investigation of the cases?—Yes.

K-5152. And I suppose you sometimes refer to the specialist in ophthalmic diseases in Madras?—Yes frequently.

K-5153. You make use of his services in doubtful cases?—Yes : I may say that I only had 33 appeals during the last 12 months.

K-5154. How many of those appeals were rejected and how many resulted in a change of the decision?—In ten cases I changed the decision.

K-5155. You say that the Railway assists one medical institution at Hubli. I understand that the Railway also subscribes to various hospitals?—Yes.

K-5156. Will you state the amounts?—I will send in that information.

K-5157. Has your average district medical officer time to do any real public health work ; is he not too much occupied in what may be called general practicianal work?—I think he has time to do general public health work.—(*Mr. Wathen*) : He has his assistants under him who are primarily responsible.

K-5158. Do you maintain that the district medical officer has time?—(*Major Cruickshank*) : He makes quarterly inspections of all the large places and I think he has time.

K-5159. Are your district medical officers trained in public health work?—Yes.

K-5160. Do they hold the D. P. H.?—Wherever possible, yes.

K-5161. In connexion with sanitation, what co-operation or consultation, if any, have you with the Government Public Health Department?—We have a certain amount ; it mostly arises from questions put by us. This subject was discussed at the Railway Conference this year. I think there is a considerable amount of co-operation.

K-5162. Is there sufficient co-operation or is there any method by which you might suggest that co-operation should be increased ?—I think the co-operation is increasing.

K-5163. How many Sanitary Inspectors do you employ ?—Ten.

K-5164. Are they all qualified ?—Yes.

K-5165. What duties do they perform ? Do. they travel up and down the line ?—We have two men who travel up and down the line ; they mostly report on the sanitary conditions at the smaller stations and medium sized stations where there is no medical staff. They also do a good deal with regard to sanitation at times of festivals and that sort of thing. The other eight Sanitary Inspectors are at stations.

K-5166. Doing work in a local area ?—Yes.

K-5167. Have you enough Sanitary Inspectors ?—I am not sure that we have enough travelling men.

K-5168. Do they do any work in connexion with the control of food supplies at railway stations ?—Another man, the food inspector, who works under me does that.

K-5169. The figures of mortality which you have supplied give one no real idea as to the amount of mortality among your railway population. Have you any suggestions to make as to how they may be improved ?—I think we can get it more accurately from the different departments ; this is what comes to the knowledge of my own staff.

K-5170. How do you maintain sanitary control over construction camps where contractor labour is employed ?—We always have a certain number of medical staff at these camps ; it is laid down in the estimates ; we generally have a Sub-Assistant Surgeon, a compounder, the menial staff and sometimes a sanitary inspector as well.

K-5171. Do you provide water supplies and conservancy arrangements in the construction camps ?—The company sees that an attempt is made to provide conservancy arrangements ; there is always a water supply and my people see that it is as sanitary as possible.

K-5172. Does the Railway pay for this water supply and conservancy ?—Yes.

K-5173. For all contractor labour in their construction camps ?—I could not say for all ; I think that is so in the big ones that come under my personal notice.

K-5174. Have you in the contractors agreements any clause which compels the contractor to provide housing and other amenities for the coolies he employs on the construction camps ?—I do not think so.

K-5175. Perhaps we might have a copy of the agreement form.—I do not think there is a clause.

K-5176. Do you think it would be advisable to have such a clause ?—From the health point of view, yes.

K-5177. We have been told that at small stations porters even though they are sick cannot go off duty without a chit from the Station Master ; if the Station Master refuses to give the chit the man must stay

on duty. Is this the case on this Railway?—I do not think so. (Mr. Wathen) : All he has to do is to report sick to the Station Master. I do not think there is any trouble about that. Normally a man would report sick to the Station Master and if the Station Master thought the man was really ill he would report to the Assistant Surgeon or apothecary.

K-5178. The Assistant Surgeon or apothecary may be many miles away. How can a man at a roadside station get a medical certificate?—(Major Cruickshank) : He must get one from the Sub-Assistant Surgeon. (Mr. Wathen) : I do not think there has been any trouble about that; I have known Station Masters very pluckily work when suffering from 102 degrees of fever. At a small place a man must do his duty until he can be relieved.

K-5179. In this Trade Union memorandum it is said that the hospitals on the Railway are classified into three classes and different kinds of medicines are provided at different hospitals for the same sickness. Is that a statement of fact?—(Major Cruickshank) : No.

K-5180. Supposing in a case of fever the medical officer prescribes 10 grains of quinine a dose but the compounder puts one grain in the bottle and keeps the remaining nine grains, do you think that might be the origin of a statement such as this?—It might be but I investigated this some months ago and my district officers test the quinine solution periodically.

K-5181. Do you consider that is essential with the medical staff that you have on the Railway?—With some of them, yes.

K-5182. It is also said that for a common disease like sore eye a superior medicine is used in the first class hospitals while an inferior medicine is used in the second class hospitals?—I think that is nonsense.

K-5183. It is also suggested that it has been a common complaint all over India that the railway doctor is a prescriber of medical certificates and that is all he does. What is the position in regard to certificates for sick leave on this railway? For instance do you accept the certificate of a general practitioner?—Yes, we do, provided it complies with certain rules.

K-5184. Do you issue any form which might be given by an employee to a general practitioner?—No.

K-5185. Do you think it would be of any use if you laid down a certain form?—I do not think it would be of much use.

K-5186. You said that the certificate would be accepted provided it complied with certain requirements of the Railway. The ordinary general practitioner does not generally or ordinarily know what those requirements are?—No.

K-5187. Would it meet the case if you had a form of medical certificate printed for distribution to your employees so that they can use that form even though they went to a general practitioner? I do not think so.

K-5188. Is there any way of overcoming the difficulty of this burning question of medical certificates or are you satisfied that the present

arrangements are satisfactory ?—We accept the majority of medical certificates that are sent in ; the employee himself has got to send word to the Railway that he is sick.

K-5189. And you accept the ordinary general practitioner's certificate ?—Yes, as a general rule, unless there is something obviously wrong.

K-5190. Then the statement with regard to the difficulty of getting acceptance of the medical certificate is not correct ?—I do not think so.

K-5191. The memorandum also says that it is an open secret that railway officers, when they send a man for medical examination, also send a demi-official letter to the medical officer as to the kind of report to be given. How many of such letters have you received within the last year ?—None.

K-5192. You say you employ a specially trained medical officer in connection with malaria work ; what kind of officer is he and what training has he had ?—He is a military Sub-Assistant Surgeon ; he has had considerable experience in the work and has been trained in the Malaria Bureau in the Punjab. He has been on the Railway for about 5 years ; he underwent special training about two years ago.

K-5193. *Mr. Cliff* : Has he put in any report and have any measures been adopted as the result of that report ?—Yes.

K-5194. What are they ?—The report was on quite a number of stations where malaria was bad. He reported on Gooty and as a result of measures which have been taken we have reduced the malaria there.

K-5195. *Col. Russell* : Then it is the definite policy of the Railway to make an attempt to reduce malaria, for instance, in these unhealthy stations of which you have given us figures ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : It is our definite policy ; we are trying to reduce malaria as much as we can.

K-5196. Is there any reason to suppose that you have not classified a sufficient number of these stations as unhealthy stations ?—(*Major Cruickshank*) : I think there is very little reason for saying that. The matter is under investigation at the moment. Most of these are very small stations.

K-5197. You say that endeavours are made to transfer men from these unhealthy stations after one year's service. Is that the definite policy of your Railway ?—(*Mr. Sinclair*) : Yes, they are transferred once a year.

K-5198. You say that the Railway makes no provision for refreshments, shelters and crèches. Are there no tiffin sheds or shelters attached to the workshops on the M. & S. M. Railway ?—Yes. This paragraph was mis-read.

K-5199. What is the present position with regard to the supply of first-aid equipment for all workshops and running sheds ?—It is going to be provided in this coming year.

K-5200. You say : “ first-aid training is not compulsory in the case of other staff, they are encouraged to attend classes which are held

practically throughout the year''. How many employees attended these classes during 1928-29 ?—Last year 1,020 of whom 450 obtained certificates.

K-5201. When a man gets a first-aid certificate, does he get any bonus or reward ?—Yes. Rs. 10 and his badge. After an interval of 12 months he comes up for re-examination and gets a further reward. They are St. John's Ambulance certificates.

K-5202. The Union memorandum, to which I have referred, says that the provisions which are decidedly inferior to the stuff available in the market are sold in the M. & S. M. Railway Co-operative stores at exorbitant prices.—(*Mr. Wathen*) : It is a separate entity which is run more or less for the staff.

K-5203. It says the materials are decidedly inferior and the prices are exorbitant. Personally I think it is wrong. They supply the refreshment rooms on the lines and they supply food to the hospitals.

K-5204. Are you satisfied with the standard ?—(*Mr. Cruickshank*) : On the whole, yes.

K-5205. Are they sold at exorbitant prices ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : I could not answer with regard to that straight away, but I do not think they are.

K-5206. *Sir' Alexander Murray* : In your memorandum you give a comparative statement of cases treated during the year ; those cases are tabulated but I see that 88 per cent. of the cases are not tabulated. How many of those untabulated cases will be accidents ?—(*Major Cruickshank*) : A very small percentage of serious accidents.

K-5207. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : How many employees were retrenched this year ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : I cannot give you the number. Owing to the construction work being reduced we had to reduce the work in the engineering workshops. We asked the Union to assist us in doing so and we put some work forward from one year to the other. We gave the men six months' notice that their services will not be required instead of one month's notice ; they were mostly temporary staff and not entitled to notice at all. We took all possible steps to employ them in other departments where there were vacancies. We used every endeavour to meet the situation but the block retrenchment, as it is called, was necessary owing to reduction of work, lack of funds and the Railway Board's policy. I think we were to retrench 300 odd last year ; I do not know how far it has gone

K-5208. How can you say that these employees are temporary when they have been in the employment of the Railway for 10 or 15 years ?—I do not think we dispensed with the services of a single man of 10 or 15 years' service ; most of them had between 3 and 5 years' service. They were taken on temporarily because it was only temporary work. Construction work is only temporary. A construction man may have 10 years' service if he gets from one job to another.

K-5209. Do you allow those temporary people to be members of the provident fund ?—No.

K-5210. Are members of the provident fund permanent employees ?—Yes,



K-5211. People who have been retrenched are members of the provident fund. There may have been some but I think I said they were mostly temporary. There may have been certain men who were not required because the work was reduced generally.

K-5212. A man who had done 15 years' service was retrenched ; he is a permanent man. The Chief Engineer said he would take him back. Then something happened secretly between the Works Manager and someone else and it was said that this man was inefficient. If he had been inefficient, he would have been discharged long ago ?—I have no knowledge of that case.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : As far as possible, we should avoid dealing with individual cases.

K-5213. *Mr. Sreenivasulu* : You said they were given six months' notice ; can you definitely say that they were not given two and three months' notice ?—I cannot say, but to my knowledge I gave a warning six months before and I provided work six months ahead. They wanted to give all a month's notice but I interfered ; I said they ought to have known about it and these men must be found work for another six months. I said that they must be told that at the end of the six months there will probably be no work for them. I expect the actual notice was a month, but there is no doubt they were given six months' warning. It has always been our policy to give notice or give warning as far as possible, so that these people may look out for jobs elsewhere. We are adopting a policy of stopping recruiting now. With our new workshops we shall have to reduce staff owing to improved machinery. We are not now recruiting in our workshops but are adopting a policy of steady attrition.

K-5214. Would it not be possible for a big administration such as yours to absorb all these 300 men who are getting low wages ?—I doubt it : I expect a lot of these men are construction staff. You may be quite certain the Railway would employ men where they could rather than dismiss them.

K-5215. When you dismiss these men, why do you not dismiss a *mistri*, a Foreman or a chargeman. Why do you not discharge men in the supervisory grade who supervise the work of these people who have been retrenched ?—Possibly they are wanted elsewhere.

K-5216. In view of the fact that you have retrenched 300 men, how is it possible for you to entertain another Foreman in the engineering workshops this month ?—I did not know that one had been entertained.

K-5217. Can you help the Union to absorb all the men that have been retrenched wherever there exist vacancies, asking the heads of departments to give preference to these men and take them on without any bias or prejudice ?—That is our policy.

K-5218. Is it the practice ?—I believe so. My heads of departments say they are absorbing a number of these workshop men ; I wrote round to them asking them to do so. We have also opened an employment bureau in connection with the Union to help in this matter. I think

Mr. Sreenivasalu himself sat as a representative of the Union on that bureau to try and absorb the staff. A large number of them refused other work.

K-5219. Is it not a fact that some of the running shed Foremen say, on some pretext or other, that these men are unfit ?—No.

K-5220. Can you guarantee to the Union that you will absorb all the men wherever there exist vacancies and whenever the Union makes an appeal for it ?—I cannot exactly guarantee that. I do not know what is involved. I am using my best endeavours.

K-5221. Have you conceded to the Union the right to represent individual cases ?—No.

K-5222. Why not ?—I explained that very fully to Mr. Cliff before.

K-5223. Do you not think that the unrest is due chiefly to individual cases ?—No, I do not think so.

K-5224. Is it not desirable that the Union should be allowed to represent cases to the administration and that the administration should interview the representatives of the Union ?—I think we have given you interviews.

K-5225. On more than one occasion the General Secretary has asked for interviews but has been refused ?—Yes, that is quite true ; that is because we have not gone as far as that ; I explained that to Mr. Cliff.

K-5226. That means you do not want to have individual cases customarily represented ?—I explained my views on that this morning.

K-5227. Do you think it is better that there should be weekly consultation with the representatives of the Union in regard to general and individual grievances, so that they can be disposed of in an amicable manner ?—The answer is in the negative.

K-5228. It is a fact that many dozens of individual cases are lying with the administration undisposed of for months together and years together ?—I should say no.

K-5229. Have you replied to the demands which were put forward by the deputation from the Union that waited on you in December last ?—No, because the Union promised me further particulars which I have not received.

K-5230. Since it has furnished those figures as desired, are you willing to reply to the demands ?—The demands cover a great number of matters and, as I have explained when that deputation met me I asked for several particulars which have not yet been supplied to me. I am quite prepared to discuss that memorandum with Mr. Giri at any moment. There were a great many demands which it was obvious no administration could admit.

K-5231. Are you willing to concede the request of the menials to travel over the whole line with free passes ?—I have conceded it ; I have said it is left to the discretion of the heads of departments and since that I have not heard of one case where a man has been dissatisfied with that decision.

K-5232. The Union has made representations on many occasions on this matter with regard to daily rated staff who are drawing less than 13 annas ?—Yes, but the daily rated staff come under different pass rules. Coolies are not eligible for passes but monthly paid menials get passes.

K-5233. Are you not willing to concede this ?—No, not at present.

K-5234. Were the employees in favour of these staff committees ?—(Mr. Sinclair) : As far as I know, yes, and they are becoming more popular.

K-5235. What percentage of the employees voted for staff committees ?—25.

K-5236. 25 per cent. voted but 75 per cent. wrote the word 'nil' on the ballot paper.—(Mr. Charlton) : It was a new thing and they did not know which of their work fellows were best fitted to serve them on the committee ; on that account they abstained from voting. The staff did not know who was the best man to vote for.—(Mr. Sinclair) : The Union sent men round to the staff asking them not to vote.—(Mr. Wathen) : They carried on a campaign against this.

K-5237. You grant leave and passes to the members of the staff committees and they need not pay any subscriptions at all ; do you grant any such privileges to members of the Union or members of the Union's executive committees ?—We grant leave and passes if they are available.

K-5238. The members of the Union are not entitled to free passes, leave and *bhatta* in order to attend meetings of the Union but the members of the staff committees are entitled to everything.—The grant of *bhatta* to the Union would be a direct subscription to the Union, which I am not authorized to use the funds at my disposal to give.

K-5239. Why do you refuse to allow Union meetings to be held in the premises of the Railway, *e.g.*, at Bangalore ? When the D. T. S. was approached, he refused and instructed the police and staff responsible not to allow the employees to hold any meeting at all.—(Mr. Sinclair) : That is not correct. He would not allow them to hold a meeting on the platform or in the public rooms which would have been inconvenient to the public, but he was quite willing to permit them to hold meetings on open ground.

K-5240. Then you have no objection to allowing the employees to hold their meetings on open grounds belonging to the company.—I have no objection.

K-5241. Have you any objection to the employees holding their meetings in the Anglo-Indian Railway institutes ?—(Mr. Wathen) : The Anglo-Indian Railway Institutes are run by Anglo-Indians ; I have no power to lend those institutes for any purpose whatever.

K-5242. But if the committee is willing that the institute should be used for that purpose ?—If the members wish to use their institute for any such extraneous purpose, they would ask my authority for it. The institutes are given for certain definite purposes and I have not yet been asked whether this is a purpose for which an institute could be used. I should have to consult all the members of the institute. I do

not think it is a purpose for which the institute should be used. The Union has nothing to do with the recreation of the staff. The institute is for the recreation of the staff. It might disturb the recreation of the staff to have meetings of the Union held in the institute.

K-5243. If the executive of the institute is willing to allow the members of the Railway Union to hold their meetings, have you any objection?—Such a case has not occurred so far as I know.

K-5244. But suppose it arises to-morrow?—Then I should be prepared to deal with it after investigating the advisability of it.

K-5245. Do you not think if you grant all the facilities to the Union which you grant to the staff committees, the Union would be more representative, which is what you desire?—That is a matter of opinion.

K-5246. Are you willing to give it a trial for two or three months and to grant the Union all the facilities which you give to the staff committees?—No. I have already explained that there is a lot of spade-work to be done with your Union. I want to see the spade-work undertaken. I am quite prepared to cover the ground with Mr. Giri on that subject.

K-5247. If the Union is prepared to prove cases of bribery, will you agree to a joint committee being set up to investigate them?—I do not quite follow your reasoning. First of all the staff have to make a complaint.

K-5248. I suppose if there are complaints about bribery, you will go into them?—If the staff complain of bribery or corruption, I will immediately go into it. I do not think we should necessarily have a joint committee; it depends entirely on the nature of the case. I will deal with the case on its merits when it arises.

K-5249. Referring to the statement of wages paid to apprentices, why is there such a disparity between the wages paid in different departments?—I will let you have that information later on; we will send in an answer.

K-5250. Could you adopt standard scales of wages in all departments?—We are endeavouring to bring them more into line, but wages must be paid with different objects and at different rates in different places; we cannot have a standard wage throughout the line.

K-5251. With regard to printing press you say "the demand of a minimum standard cannot be insisted on". Why not?—(Mr. Marsh): Because if we fixed a definite standard the labour would not always be available. We have to take the labour as available and it does not necessarily come up to a definite standard.

K-5252. That is to say, if the labour is cheap?—It has nothing to do with the price: it is a question of the class of labour employed.

K-5253. No system of apprenticeship is in force in the printing press, why is that?—In Madras there is no system of apprenticeship in the printing industry at all.

K-5254. You say: that normally selection is made from suitable men already in the service and recruitment from England of Assistant Works

Managers or Assistant Foremen is only made when suitable men are not available on the spot. Can you substantiate that? When men already in the service are promoted they only act as Foremen and chargemen temporarily until a man is recruited from England?—(Mr. Wathen) : Possibly those men have not the qualifications for permanent promotion. (Mr. Thompson) : We do recruit Foremen in the country where they are available. At the present time we have 84 Foremen ; out of that number 33 have been recruited from Home ; 20 are Anglo-Indians recruited in the country and 1 is an Indian. When there is a vacancy, we always endeavour to find some body in the country to fill that vacancy. (Mr. Wathen) : That is our policy. (Mr. Thompson) : If some body goes on leave we put another man on his work on trial and then we decide whether that man can be made permanent.

K-5255. Referring to what you say as to relations between staff and rank and file in workshops and printing press, have any employees of the machine shop at Perambur and shops at Hubli and printing press at Royapuram constantly complained against their superiors of ill-treatment?—(Mr. Thompson) : I do not think that is so. Certainly when any workman has written to me and complained of being ill-treated, his case has been enquired into. I feel sure the workmen are not ill-treated.

K-5256. When the workers address the management to set up an enquiry committee, why is it not granted?—(Mr. Wathen) : These cases are very carefully investigated and are dealt with after due enquiry.

K-5257. You say : “ about 10 per cent. of the railway’s printing work is given out on contract ”. Would it not be possible to do all the work in the printing press?—(Mr. Marsh) : A larger amount of the printing work is now being done in our own press and next year the amount of printing work given out on contract will probably have fallen to 3 per cent.

K-5258. Do you think the quarters which are supplied for the lowest employees are satisfactory from the point of view of sanitation and health?—(Mr. Wathen) : I think it is a good quarter in accordance with the conditions of the country generally ; I should say it is better than they get in their villages.

K-5259. Workers are compelled to occupy the Company’s quarters.—In certain cases where we have provided quarters, people are required to occupy them in accordance with their agreements ; for instance, I am compelled to occupy my quarters and I am a worker. At all events if I did not occupy my quarters, I should still have to pay the rent.

Sir Alexander Murray : May I refer you to the memorandum which says : “ Quarters for permanent way coolies are provided at the more important stations, but it is found that elsewhere the coolies prefer to live in their villages and the quarters provided are unoccupied.”

The witness : That is so ; we do not compel the gang coolies to live there.

K-5260. Mr. Sreenivasalu : What is the height of the roofing ? Is it a fact that quarters in the Hubli district are worse?—I could not say ; that line was built at a different time from other parts of the Railway :

years ago it was probably built as a famine line. I do not know what the height of the roofing is. I have handed plans to the Royal Commission showing what the heights of the roofs are.

K-5261. Is it not a fact that a Station Master suffered from sun-stroke and lost his two children owing to the low roofing in the Bezwada district two years ago ?—I do not know about that.

K-5262. When these coolies prefer to live in their villages and the quarters provided are unoccupied, is that not due to cost of living and unsuitability of quarters ?—I do not think so. My experience of the Madrassi is that he very often likes to live in his own house whatever it may be rather than live elsewhere. The gangmen do not live in their quarters as a rule. Whether that is because they are along the side of the line I do not know, but they are men recruited from the villages.

K-5263. *Mr. Cliff* : Are the houses of the gangmen very scattered ?—Yes, they are sometimes in rather lonely places ; they are very often between stations.

K-5264. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : You say “ the existing designs for the accommodation of labour have been standardised as much as possible and are the result of various suggestions received from time to time with a view to the improvement of the earlier designs ”. Was the Union consulted ?—No, I do not think the unions have been actually consulted on this.

K-5265. Have you seen how people suffer for water (handing photographs to the witness) ? Have you ever visited the single unit quarters ? That is a photograph of the unit ; it is a condemned carriage.—That was probably all that was asked for at the time.

*Mr. Sreenivasalu* : Here is a picture of a unit 10 feet square in which half a dozen children are living.

K-5266. *Mr. Gregory* : How many subjects have been submitted by the staff committees and sanctioned by you ?—(*Mr. Sinclair*) : 44 proposals were made by the Central Staff Committee ; we agreed to 14 ; 21 are under consideration and 9 were definitely refused. That is the first central committee we have.

K-5267. When the members of the committee decide to put certain subjects on the agenda is there any restriction with regard to that ?—No, they sit by themselves in their first preliminary meeting and make out a list of questions to be dealt with.

K-5268. I understand an employment officer has recently been sanctioned.—(*Mr. Wathen*) : Yes.

K-5269. Have you formed any opinion as to what his duties will be ?—He will be a liaison officer between me and the staff ; he will generally look after the interests of the staff. I have appointed a non-railway officer so that he may start without any prejudices. He will deal with labour questions generally and with the grievances of the staff as they arise. He will try to give advice and assistance on all establishment matters and staff work. He will be working under me. His headquarters will be Madras.

K-5270. Will he have power to travel over your line and inspect ?—Yes.

K-5271. Will he have power to inspect within certain limits certain records of offices ?—Yes, he will have power to go through the records.

K-5272. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Will his duty partly be to try and co-ordinate the work of these staff committees in the districts ?—I think it will lead to that eventually.

K-5273. Do you get the minutes of the meetings of these committees ?—Yes.

K-5274. Are they sent up to the Agent ?—(*Mr. Sinclair*) : They are not sent up to the Agent. If there are cases to which I cannot agree but if there is something in what they have asked and it affects the whole of the Railway, I refer them to the Agent.

K-5275. May I suggest that the minutes of these meetings ought to be passed on to this Personnel Officer.—(*Mr. Wathen*) : I accept that.

K-5276. Do your employees take advantage to any extent of these night schools ?—Not greatly. There are 21 at Guntakal and 15 at Hubli.

K-5276a. Do you not consider it necessary to have more such schools ?—Not at present.

K-5277. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You tell us that more speedy payment of wages is more or less impracticable, but could you not pay all your workers in the workshops before the 19th of the following month ?—A reduction of the period might be possible, but it would necessitate paying some part of the money approximately, adjustments being made subsequently. We are giving the matter consideration, but it has been found impracticable to expedite the payment any further. The staff are paid regularly every month. Instead of allowing the pay-keeper to travel by ordinary train he goes by special train so as to quicken the payment or wages.

K-5278. On the South Indian Railway they pay their Mechanical department staff fortnightly ?—(*Mr. Fink*) : I think we could introduce a system like that, at any rate we could consider it.

K-5279. In how many cases have you had to dispense with the services of any workman because attachments have been made against him in respect of debt ?—(*Mr. Thompson*) : I do not think we have dismissed any body under those circumstances.

K-5280. Then this is a dead letter ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : No, because it acts as a deterrent ; they know it exists and every case is investigated when it comes up.

K-5281. Have you attempted to have an Employment Officer in the shops ?—Not yet. We see an employment bureau functioning very successfully on the North Western Railway ; we have not tried that yet.

K-5282. *Mr. Sreenivasulu* : Are the expenses of the Agent's dances paid from the fines fund ?—No.

K-5283. Could you not avoid frequent transfers from one distant place to another and particularly to different linguistic parts ?—Endeavours have always been made to avoid that.

K-5284. It appears from the figures given by you that there are 17 schools for the education of the children of European and Anglo-Indian employees, numbering 700, while there are only 5 schools for the children of Indian employees numbering 800. Why should there be that great disparity and how many Anglo-Indian employees are there ?—(*Mr. Fink*) : The number of Anglo-Indians is 2,236.

K-5285. There appears to be racial discrimination ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : I should say not. The education of Indian children is mostly in the hands of Provincial Governments and District Boards ; the Company only maintains schools for the children of Indian employees at stations where the local Government or district and local boards have not provided for their education. There are practically few schools for the children of European and Anglo-Indian employees on this Railway and as a consequence this administration has to provide for their education by maintaining a greater number of schools for them.

K-5286. At Jolarpet the employees applied for a lower secondary school ; was their request granted ?—The whole educational policy of the Railway is in the boiling pot now owing to the difficulty with regard to Central and Provincial administration.

K-5287. Referring to what is stated about gratuities in your memorandum, why do you not allow employees to retire voluntarily when they wish to do so and grant them a gratuity proportionate to the length of their service ? They are only entitled to gratuity when they have completed 15 years' service ?—Gratuity is a reward for long service ; in that respect we are bound by the Fundamental Rules of the Government of India.

K-5288. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Apparently the term of service of your Railway is five years longer ?—I am speaking without having looked up the matter, but I think those rules have been approved by the Government of India. It may be due to the fact that we consider the gratuity should be a reward for long service. On reduction of establishment we pay proportionate gratuities. At the same time we do not think the gratuity should be paid except for long service.

K-5289. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : From your memorandum it appears that at Perambur, where there are 7,000 workers, the fines amount to Rs. 1,405, whereas at Hubli where there are 3,000 workers the fines amount to Rs. 1,679. What is the cause of that disparity ?—I do not know.

K-5290. It is stated that the printing press wages are calculated on an hourly basis ?—(*Mr. Fink*) : At the Government Press and on the East Indian Railway they are calculated on an hourly basis.

K-5291. When claims arise under the Workmen's Compensation Act, you pay full wages for the first ten days and after that you pay half wages ?—(*Mr. Wathen*) : We go further than the Workmen's Compensation Act.

(The witnesses withdrew.)



Mr. SYED MADHAR, Mr. A. S. FERNANDEZ, Mr. S. M. SUNDRA-CHARI, Mr. K. VEERASAMI, Mr. THOMAN, Mr. G. KRISHNAMURTI, Mr. LAKSHMINARAYANA and Mr. P. R. K. SARMA, representatives of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees' Union, Madras.

K-5292. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is your experience of Railway work ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : I have worked 10 years as a clerk in the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : I have been an "A" class apprentice for five years in mechanical engineering in the Perambur works ; I have completed my apprenticeship and have now served as an artisan for two years, I am now a tool designer and draftsman. (*Mr. Fernandez*) : I have served for 27 years on this line from a cleaner to a driver. (*Mr. Sundrachari*) : I am a carpenter with 26 years' service. (*Mr. Veerasami*) : I am a control operator with 13 years' service. (*Mr. Thoman*) : I have had 17 years' service here. (*Mr. Lakshminarayana*) : I have done 12 years' service on this Railway. (*Mr. Sarma*) : I am not an employee of the Railway ; I am interested in labour problems and have been intimately interested in the Railway Employees' Union for one year.

K-5293. What are you by profession ?—I took to the labour movement after taking my degree at the college. I am the editor of the official organ of the Union and am also the secretary in charge of representation and publicity.

K-5294. When was your Union established ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : In 1919. It was registered in 1928.

K-5295. Has it been recognized ?—It was not recognized in spite of its having a membership of 30,000.

K-5296. Has the Railway recognized you in any way ?—Official recognition is not given by the administration. The Agent discusses matters with us, we want a document from the administration saying "I have this day recognized this Union". We want a written document.

K-5297. Will that do you any good ?—Yes, it will do us good as long as there is strength in the Union. Of course if there is no Union then recognition will do no good.

K-5298. Have you a copy of the constitution of the Union ?—We will send it to you.

K-5299. What is the strength of your executive committee ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : Our executive committee has a membership of about 130.

K-5300. The Agent said he thought the constitution provided for a committee of 300 ?—Yes ; but the constitution is now being revised or at any rate revision of the constitution is under contemplation, and we are going to have only about 100 members of the committee.

K-5301. How many is your committee at the moment ?—130.

K-5302. In addition to that you have an executive committee ?—No, that is the central executive committee.

K-5303. How many members do you say you have got altogether ?—The present strength is about 30,000.

K-5304. Are all those paying members ?—Fully paying members. (Mr. Madhar) : With this 30,000 we have got some 5,000 more, who are quarter-paid or paid by instalment. We have not taken them into account.

K-5305. I notice that the Commissioner for Labour in a statement he has given us says that on the 31st March last the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees' Union had 7,340 members ?—That is correct.

K-5306. But you say that since then you have added another 20,000 members ?—Yes.

K-5307. All paying subscriptions ?—(Mr. Krishnamurti) : Fully paid up subscriptions.

K-5308. Do you publish your accounts ?—Yes, we publish our accounts in our official organ month by month.

K-5309. I suppose you will not object to sending us a copy ?—We have absolutely no objection.

K-5310. You are a member of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation ?—Yes.

K-5311. You can answer this question or not just as you wish : are you a member of the Trade Union Congress or of the Trade Union Federation ?—We reserve our opinion. (Mr. Madhar) : In the last Trade Union Congress at Nagpur difficulties arose as to whether our Union should be connected with the Trade Union Congress or not. We are going to deal with this question at our annual general meeting this year and it will be decided by the general body of the members whether we are to be connected with the Trade Union Congress or not.

K-5312. Mr. Cliff : You have not had an annual meeting since that Congress ?—We have not.

K-5313. Sir Alexander Murray : In your memorandum you say there must be a selection committee for each department consisting of officers and representatives of employees nominated by the Union. Can you tell me of any industry in any country which selects its employees by a select committee consisting of officers and representatives of the employees ?—That is only a suggestion made by the Union, because there is so much corruption, and we always say that the qualified sons of the employees are not given a chance on the Railway ; that is why the Union wants machinery of this kind.

K-5314. There is a Central Labour Board of some description in Madras ?—We have nothing to do with it.

K-5315. The Agent told us that preference was given to sons of employees ?—That is not so in most cases.

K-5316. In your memorandum you say : " rules regarding submission of appeals seldom promote justice and fair play. Instances are not rare in which complaints against the supervisory staff were not enquired into but were decided on the version of the supervising staff alone ". Did you take these appeals up to the Agent ?—After exhausting all the official resources the Union takes up those cases and in officially representing them we have experienced many difficulties. When the appeals are submitted through the heads of the departments, the head of a department makes remarks in the margin and appeals are kept back by him. This causes

discontent among the employees who come to the Union and the Union takes up such cases. The Union has represented many cases to the administration but the replies which we have received from the administration are all very unsatisfactory.

K-5317. Could you not get a batch of these cases in which appeals have been kept back and post them on to the Agent?—The only reply which is received is, “ I have carefully gone through your appeal and the treatment given by your officer is quite right ; I do not see my way to interfere with this case ”.

K-5318. Do you not help workmen in preparing their cases ?—We do, but the results depend upon the fancy of the administration.

K-5319. Have any of your members been appointed members of these staff committees ?—The Union is opposed to these staff committees because they are rival bodies to the Union. The object of these staff committees is to destroy the trade union movement in India. We advise our members to have nothing to do with the staff committees but the administration uses its power among the employees and compels some employees to be members of these staff committees. When a member of the Union becomes a member of the staff committee, the union severs connection with that man.

K-5320. You appear to think that the Railway ought to manufacture everything for itself.—Yes.

K-5321. But the business of a railway company is to run the railway.—Yes, of course it is, but the materials can be bought cheaper in India than at Home and in view of the fact that unemployment is so acute in India they should get their materials in India. Firms like Burn & Co. of Calcutta, supply materials for building. Engines which were formerly fitted in the workshops of the railway are now brought here fitted together. After those engines have run on the line for a few days they require refitting and that involves extra cost. The use of the British calculating and tabulating machines in the statistical department of the agency has caused the retrenchment of about 30 men.

K-5322. Do you not think the Railway should run its works and do its maintenance work, but that outside firms should manufacture and supply engines, wagons and whatever is necessary ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : I agree with you. The bone of contention is this : that certain materials which were previously produced in the Engineering Department of the Railway are now manufactured by Burn & Co. and other firms and that has led to block retrenchment on the Railway. We are averse to such block retrenchments.

K-5323. You say that houses are vacant but the Agency tell us that with the exception of some houses for gangmen who reside on the line the houses are fully occupied.—(*Mr. Madhar*) : If you visit Perambur you will see that most of the quarters are vacant. The rents of these quarters fixed by the Railway are too high when compared with the local rents outside the Railway colony and further the accommodation provided by the railway quarters is inferior to quarters that we can get outside the Railway colony.

K-5324. What do you pay in the bazaar ?—Far less than we pay in the Railway colony. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : For example, the workshop men of the Perambur workshop live within a radius of 25 miles. Close by there are suburban villages in which the rents are far cheaper and if you pay Re. 1 a month you can get a nice hut, comfortable, healthy and far superior to the Railway single unit. Most of the workshop people at Perambur live in suburban quarters.

K-5325. *Mr. Cliff* : What would the same workman have to pay in the Railway quarters ?—I think Rs. 3.

K-5326. What distance from the Railway workshop is the place where you can obtain houses at Re. 1 ?—Within a radius of about 16 miles. Of course, the Railway runs free local special trains and therefore we are able to come to the workshops.

K-5327. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You complain that  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the capital cost of the building or 10 per cent. of pay is charged and this is too high ; then you say that in lieu of free quarters an allowance of 20 per cent. of the salary should be given.—(*Mr. Madhar*) : That is for Presidency towns. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : Compared to the conveniences provided in the Railway quarters, 20 per cent. is not high because in the Railway quarters men do not get drinking water or latrine convenience ; they are treated more like animals than human beings in Railway quarters. On the other hand in private quarters we are given every facility. For those greater facilities we have to pay more rent and therefore we ask for 20 per cent. of the salary.

K-5328. *Mr. Cliff* : What are the districts in which you get these facilities ?—In the city of Madras.

K-5329. What do you pay ?—For Rs. 5 or Rs. 6 you get two rooms with nice taps, separate latrines, one or two taps for a house containing 4 or 5 families. They are not like the Railway quarters.

K-5330. *Sir Alexander Murray* : I see you object to the staff committee and you object to the sanitary committee.—Yes.

K-5331. And yet you ask for a welfare committee. If they call the staff committee and the sanitary committee welfare committees, will you accept them ?—The name does not make any difference. When we ask for welfare committees, we do not mean committees of the nature of staff committees ; we mean that there should be committees in which representatives of the union and of the administration should function.

K-5332. Not only do you object to staff committees but, as I understand it, you object to recognition of other unions.—Yes.

K-5333. You object also to the registration of what you call private unions. Do you expect the Government of India to introduce into the Trade Unions Act a section saying that there must be no competition with the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees' Union ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : It is not exactly for the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees' Union but it should be done throughout India.

K-5334. When you say the Act ought to be amended so that rival unions may be discouraged, what do you mean ?—The Registrar of Trade Unions at present has no duties in this respect ; he must be given some work to do ; he must investigate whether the union which is applying for

registration is a genuine or a bogus body. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : Under the Trade Unions Act any seven persons can form a union ; seven mischief makers or blacklegs can form a union. If the administration began to recognize yellow or blackleg unions, the real union will make no progress ; that is why we object to it.

K-5335. Do you mean that the registration officer should decide which unions should be registered ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : Yes. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : It all depends upon the strength of the union.

K-5336. But suppose there is a difference of opinion and a second union is formed. Do you suggest that the Registrar should refuse to register that second union ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : The difficulty is this : when there is a real union functioning for the promotion of trade union principles in a particular industry, there is a possibility of yellow or blackleg unions or staff committees being introduced by the administration with a few members. Such bodies would naturally be rivals to the unions which have the real strength and the real membership.

K-5337. But if the union has the real strength and the real membership, it need not fear any competition.—We are representing these matters to the Commission and we expect the Commission to investigate.

K-5338. *Mr. Joshi* : There are some people who want a fighting union. Supposing your union ceases to be a fighting union, do you really think that the interests of the workers will be safeguarded if there is a rule preventing another union from being started ?—When the necessity arises for a new union to be started that necessity can be appreciated by the Registrar who is paid for that purpose. We want the Registrar to be given the duty of investigating whether unions which seek registration under the Trade Unions Act are real and genuine.

K-5339. You want that power to be given to the Registrar ?—Yes.

K-5340. It seems that your Union has such great confidence in the Registrar that you wish him to decide whether a union is genuine or bogus. Do you agree with that proposition ?—No. (*Mr. Sarma*) : We do not want to give the Registrar that power. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : We desire to correct what we have said ; we do not want to give arbitrary powers to the Registrar.

K-5341. How many times does your executive committee meet ?—Previously we were meeting once a month, but after the President had an interview with the Agent he suggested that the central executive committee should meet under the chairmanship of the president so that he might be responsible for all the acts of the central executive committee. Now we are meeting once in two months or once in a month.

K-5342. Then who does the ordinary business during those two months ?—The secretaries and office-bearers carry on the work.

K-5343. Do you think it right that for two months the secretaries should be fully authorized to carry on work without consulting anybody ?—We do not see any inconvenience in it. (*Mr. Madhar*) : On any question that arises we take the opinion of the President by corresponding with him. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : The ordinary course of business is decided by the decisions of the central executive committee which meets once in two months. (*Mr. Madhar*) : This union has different branches in different places ; every branch has its own executive committee, The

head offices of these branches are joined together at the central head office which has a separate executive committee. It is that executive committee alone which meets once in two months.

K-5344. How are the staff committees constituted ?—In the district the District Traffic Superintendent, who is the immediate head in that district, is the president of the staff committee. The Chief Transportation Superintendent and Traffic Manager, who is the head of these traffic departments, is the president of the central staff committee.

K-5345. Are the members elected ?—These members are not elected ; they are compelled to become members by force.

K-5346. Is there some kind of election ?—There is no election at all ; it is done by nomination. There is election for members of the staff committee but there is no election of the president.

K-5347. Members of the staff committee are elected.—Yes.

K-5348. If your Union has 30,000 members out of 47,000 employees, is it not possible for your Union to control these elections ?—These elections are based purely on bogus votes or something like that. Most of the employees have written 'nil' on the voting papers. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : We can easily control the staff committees but we do not want to have anything to do with them because their constitution is fundamentally wrong.

K-5349. But if you can get elected on these staff committees men in whom you have confidence, then what is fundamentally wrong with these staff committees ?—We appreciate your point, but the staff committee has a nominated president and the organization of the staff committee destroys the trade union spirit in the men because it has been started in rivalry to an existing trade union organization. The president of the staff committee is the immediate head of that particular department and if an aggrieved person were to represent his case to the man who has committed the mistake we believe nothing would come out of it.

K-5350. But does the staff committee not afford you another means of representing your case in addition to the Union ?—It is mere bifurcation of responsibilities or a repetition of the system of dyarchy which we do not want. There is already a union which represents legitimate cases. If the active members in the trade union movement are recruited to the staff committees, real work of the trade union movement will go to the dogs. Another thing is that personal contact with the District Officer has a bad effect on the members. That is my practical experience as a worker.

K-5351. You object to personal contact with the District Officer ?—Yes.

K-5352. Is there not the same danger of your secretary who may not be guided by any members of the executive council for two months being under the influence of either the Agent or the District Officer ?—But we have got the executive committee which is carefully watching the secretary all the time.

K-5353. But your executive committee can also watch the members of the staff committee.—It is not practical.

K-5354. You seem to be afraid of coming into contact with the officers.—(*Mr. Fernandez*) : The weight of the officers is too great. The president is the immediate superior and if you put forward anything which goes against him he objects to it ; he may not show his feelings but he may have that feeling against you afterwards. The Union on the other hand is independent of the official influence. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : The constitution of the staff committees is drawn up by the administration and the men have no voice in it ; they cannot alter it or amend it.

K-5355. Have you any changes to suggest in the constitution ?—If the constitution of the staff committees was similar to that of our Union and subject to democratic control we should have absolutely no objection to staff committees.

K-5356. You want certain changes in the constitution of the staff committees.—We want a thorough change.

K-5357. What change do you propose ?—We cannot propose it all of a sudden ; it requires consideration (*Mr. Veerasami*) : In our experience staff committees on other railways have always failed.

K-5358. *Mr. Cliff* : You say that works councils and industrial councils constituted on the lines of those in England will be greatly helpful. Would you object to consultation in works councils of that character ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : No, we say that they would be helpful.

K-5359. That being so, what difficulty would there be in your permeating the staff councils ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : You might have asked the administration what good has been done by this staff committee which has been functioning for the past two months. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : We are prepared to accept works councils and industrial councils as constituted in England : I mean works councils in which there are representatives of trade unions and of employers. Works councils might consist of five members of whom three would be representative of the trade unions.

K-5360. Would all the members be work-people ?—Of course.

K-5361. Is it your contention that there are more apprentices trained than can be absorbed ?—That is not the fact ; there are only a few apprentices trained but places which could easily be filled by apprentices after their training are given away to outsiders. In the Electrical Department and the engineering workshops apprentices are turned away and it becomes a blind-alley.

K-5362. Have any considerable number been turned away ?—The union has figures which we will submit later on. There are several cases in which the services of apprentices have been terminated.

K-5363. *Mr. Gregory* : Where they are inefficient ?—It is not due to inefficiency ; they have passed in the trade schools conducted by the Railway. The Union has made several representations on this matter.

K-5364. *Mr. Cliff* : With regard to unemployment you say that compulsory retirements on medical certificates and periodical medical examinations are quite common. Would your Union be prepared to accept a medical referee to whom cases could be referred ? You want a judgment independent of the railway medical service.—Yes.

K-5365. Again you say that persons who are thus discharged should be given the benefit of provident fund and gratuity as if they retire on

superannuations. What do you mean by that ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : In the construction men are employed for 7 years and 10 years. Afterwards these men are sent home without being given any provident fund or gratuity because they have been employed temporarily. Not only is that so on construction work but in the printing press employees are kept on temporary service for 5 or 6 years. In some departments of the Railway men are kept temporarily for 12 years. All of a sudden the Railway will discharge these men without giving any benefit. After a man has spent 12 years of his life in a particular industry it may be quite impossible for him to find any employment outside. Therefore the Union suggest that if men are employed for more than two years they must have the advantage of the provident fund and gratuity.

K-5366. You say : “ At present no arrangement is made by the Municipality to clean the streets of the Railway colony, nor is there an adequate conservancy staff in the Railway department.” Have you made representations to the Railway Company in respect of that ?—Especially in the Railway colonies the facilities for conservancy are very inadequate. In some cases we have made representations. We have especially made representations with regard to quarters here at salt-cotours. Those quarters are built in a graveyard in which bodies are still being buried ; in front of those quarters there is a big rubbish store ; on one side there is a pumping station and on the other side there is a big canal of stagnant water. These quarters were not occupied by any of the staff for 4 or 5 years and then the Railway compelled some of the workers to occupy these quarters. The Union passed resolutions on these matters in its general meeting at salt-cotours some 3 months ago.

K-5367. Was that sent in to the Agent ?—Yes.

K-5368. Have you had any reply ?—We have not had any reply.

K-5369. I understand that your members are prepared to make a contribution towards sickness insurance. Have you consulted your members on that ?—Yes, and we are also going to take this up in the coming conference. The Perambur branch have already dealt with the matter and the members are willing to contribute a quarter.

K-5370. How many members are there in that particular branch ?—Perambur is the head office ; it is not a branch ; in Perambur there are 7,000 members.

K-5371. How long have you as a union been dealing with the Agent unofficially ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : We have been dealing with the Agent for the last ten years, *i.e.*, from 1919.

K-5372. The Agent left us with the impression that he thought you had not grown to the full stature of a trade union yet ; what do you say to that ?—We do not know what he means by that. (*Mr. Madhar*) : Does the Agent mean that the union should go on strike so as to demonstrate its power ? Our ideal is negotiation but if negotiations fail we shall of course ultimately resort to the strike weapon. If the Agent were to recognize the method of negotiation, it would be very useful to the industry.

K-5373. I gather from what you say in your memorandum that your Union is in favour of minimum wage fixing machinery being established ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : Yes.



K-5374. Is your Union in favour of putting its case to a minimum wages board and accepting their decision?—Certainly.

K-5375. What is meant by this statement in your memorandum, “Deductions on account of debits work great havoc”?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : For example an employees lost a volt meter, but that volt meter was afterwards recovered by another employee who had put it somewhere and forgotten it. For the simple mistake of forgetting that volt meter that employee, who was getting Rs. 15 a month, was fined Rs. 30, which was recovered from him by instalments.

K-5376. But what are the deductions on account of debits?—Those are due to loans from co-operative societies and the urban bank and the provident fund.

K-5377. Can you give us examples of what you mean by “debits”?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : At very busy stations like the Madras Central Station the Booking clerks miss a good deal of money and these amounts are debited from their salary. I have seen instances of Booking clerks on Rs. 17 and Rs. 20 debited with sums of Rs. 300 and Rs. 400. In the case of goods clerks if they make a mistake in calculating the freights prevailing on different railways they are invariably debited with the difference in freights.

K-5378. Could your Union send to the Commission a statement of debits which have been made within recent times and also what they propose as a solution?—Yes.

K-5379. You say that one of the reasons of indebtedness is the social customs of the people. What do you propose to do as regards social customs?—Trade Unions carry on propaganda and teach the people to reduce their expenditure on social customs.

K-5380. Are you meeting with success?—It is too premature to say.

K-5381. In your memorandum you refer to the creation of a joint standing machinery. Would you be prepared for the decisions of that board to be compulsory?—Not necessarily.

K-5382. You would prefer that their decisions should be made and either party should be free to accept?—Yes.

K-5383. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : With regard to staff committees do you not think that they are unnecessary in view of the fact that you have already got executive committees.—(*Mr. Thoman*) : It would be better if the staff committees were made subsidiary to the unions and if the unions were permitted to elect the members of the staff committees.

K-5384. Would you have such staff committees even though the chairman happened to be nominated by the administration?—I would not have any objection to the chairman being nominated.

K-5385. *Mr. Cliff* : Are these answers given on behalf of the Union?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti and Mr. Madhar*) : Yes, they must be.

K-5386. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : The railway administration stated this morning that they brought out covenanted men from England only when there were no competent men already in the service fit to be promoted to

those posts. Do you agree with that statement ?—(*Mr. Thoman*) : I think it is not correct. I can give instances of Drivers who have run mail trains and special trains of Viceroy and members of the Royal Family but have been overlooked and covenanted men brought from England. There are also instances where men have been holding the position of Foremen in the workshops with credit but have been overlooked and fresh men brought from England.

K-5387. Do you have any case of indiscriminate promotion on your Railway ?—(*Mr. Fernandez*) : Yes, we have. For instance there was a man in the carriage shop earning Rs. 140. All of a sudden he was given Rs. 300 superseding men drawing Rs. 270 and so on.

K-5388. With regard to quarters, are there different types of quarters for employees of different races though belonging to the same grade and drawing the same pay ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : Yes, certainly. Though an Indian draws the same pay and pays the same rent as an Anglo-Indian his quarters are not as spacious as those of the Anglo-Indians, not to speak of the European.

K-5389. Do you ever succeed in getting interviews with the Agent or the heads of your departments whenever you have a grievance to represent ?—(*Mr. Thoman*) : Interview with higher authorities can be had only with the permission of the immediate superior officers which is very rarely given.

K-5390. This morning the Railway administration stated that punishments were inflicted on the employees only with their knowledge and after the approval of the immediate superior officer. Has that been your experience ?—(*Mr. Fernandez*) : They do not at all take the explanation of the employees before they punish them. (*Mr. Madhar*) : I can cite one case, that of Mr. C. John Samuel of the Signal Engineering Department who has been discharged without any reasons being given, or without his being asked to offer an explanation. The Union has taken up his case and instructed him to appeal.

K-5391. In the workshops what is the maximum number of days one can absent himself without permission ?—(*Mr. Thoman*) : An employee can absent himself without permission for 26 days after which he will be discharged.

K-5392. How is it on the line ?—On the line there is no such thing as absentsing without permission unless for sufficient reasons.

K-5393. Have you any difficulty in getting medical certificates in times of illness ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : We do find it difficult to get medical certificates when we need them. This medical certificate is only a means by which the administration gets rid of men whom they do not like for one reason or other. For instance here is a letter written by the Works Manager of the Engineering Workshop, Arkonam, to the District Medical Officer, Perambur, while sending 7 men for medical examination. He remarks in the letter that they are all irregular and that 4 of them in particular might be unfit for regular work thereby implying that they might be declared unfit. We take strong exception to the Manager writing a letter of that description to the District Medical Officer. The irregularity may not be due to sickness but may be due to various other causes.

K-5394. Are any of you present here occupying the Company's quarters?—(*Mr. Fernandez*) : Yes, I am occupying the Company's quarters.

K-5395. How much do you pay?—20 per cent. of my pay, *i.e.*, Rs. 20 *plus* Rs. 2 for conservancy and Rs. 2 for water tax which makes the total Rs. 24. (*Mr. Thoman*) : I pay 20 per cent. of my pay, *i.e.*, Rs. 27 *plus* Rs. 2-8-0 for electric installation, Rs. 2-8-0 for conservancy and Rs. 2-8-0 for water tax which makes a total of about Rs. 35. Besides I have to pay for the current consumed.

K-5396. *Mr. Gregory* : You are a Driver on Rs. 200?—(*Mr. Fernandez*) : Yes.

K-5397. How much per month do you get on the whole including overtime?—I get about Rs. 500.

K-5398. But you pay only Rs. 20 or less than 5 per cent. of your monthly income as rent?—If you take it that way, yes.

K-5399. You said just now that punishments were inflicted without giving an opportunity to the employees concerned to give an explanation. Is not a charge sheet given to the man concerned and is he not asked to explain his case before he is punished?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : Only in the Traffic Department there is a form given to the man concerned and he is asked to submit his explanation. In other departments no such thing is done.

K-5400. In your memorandum you suggest that "foreign scholarships should be given to apprentices and employees showing special aptitude for work". What exactly do you mean by foreign scholarships?—For instance apprentices in mechanical engineering, after they have had some training here may be sent to Great Britain or other places to get some more training. The Company should bear the expenses of such scholarships.

K-5401. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Do you suggest that a man trained abroad will be better than a man trained in this country?—We do not suggest that at all ; since the administration attaches some importance to training abroad we want to satisfy them by sending men to be trained abroad. We do not believe in the superiority of foreign training ourselves.

K-5402. *Mr. Gregory* : In your memorandum you say that the works committee is "acting as a rival institution to the union and intended to undermine its strength and influence". Do you actually subscribe to that statement?—It is our considered opinion.

K-5403. You give the administration no credit at all for good intentions when starting these committees?—Absolutely nothing. (*Mr. Madhar*) : We have been anxious to co-operate with the administration but opportunities to do so have been meagre.

K-5404. In reply to the Chairman you stated that there were quarters vacant in Perambur. Did the Union advise the workers not to go into those quarters?—No.

K-5405. Did they not take this step in order to get free quarters ?—No ; the watch and ward staff applied for free quarters and they were granted. But we never interfered with the quarters for the rest of the staff.

K-5406. Your own statement that the quarters were unsatisfactory and the statement of the Railway administration this morning led me to believe that you advised them not to move into those quarters ?—We never advised the men ; they themselves found the quarters to be unsatisfactory. (*Mr. Thoman*) : I am a member of the Union myself and I am occupying the Company's quarters. The quarters for the highly paid staff are satisfactory and they are worth taking but the quarters for the low paid staff are not occupied because they are very unsatisfactory.

K-5407. When were these quarters completed ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : Some of them were completed two years ago but even now they have no water supply.

K-5408. In your memorandum you say that “daily-rated men must be given free medical attendance”. Is it not a fact that all employees on the Railway are given free medical attention ?—(*Mr. Fernandez*) : They are given but not their families. If doctors attend on their families they have to be paid. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : Out-patients in the hospital get free medical attendance, but in-patients have to pay.

K-5409. All drawing less than Rs. 30 a month get free treatment ?—Yes.

K-5410. All daily-rated men draw less than Rs. 30 ?—No ; I am a daily rated man and I get nearly Rs. 65.

K-5411. Have you had to pay ?—I have never been under treatment at a hospital.

K-5412. Do you think that daily rated men receiving less than Rs. 30 do not have to pay as in-patients, whereas if they are receiving over Rs. 30 they do have to pay as in-patients ?—Yes.

K-5413. Have you ever put forward a demand for an Indian institute ?—In our memorandum to the Agent we have mentioned it a number of times.

K-5414. You have asked for a combined institute with Anglo-Indians and Europeans ?—Yes, with the object of doing away with this rivalry.

K-5415. At Trichinopoly the other day when a party of the Royal Commission visited Golden Rock, they were shown a building which was intended to be the combined institute, but the Union there definitely asked to have a separate institute for Indians. Would that occur if

this administration were to provide you with a combined institute ?—We do not think so.

K-5416. You think in Madras they would prefer a combined institute ?—Yes. The M. and S. M. Railway need not spend any money by way of experiment because there is already a big institute at Perambur, which can be thrown open to Indians also.

K-5417. Have you referred the subject to the Agent ?—Yes. (*Mr. Madhar*) : The administration have discriminated. At the Central Station there are 52 Anglo-Indians and the administration have provided these Anglo-Indians with a separate institute, whereas in the New General offices there are nearly 3,000 employees and for them there is no institute at present. For the past 1½ years we have been constantly asking for an institute.

K-5418. Is there a sports club ?—Yes, but it has no premises.

K-5419. Have you asked for premises for that sports club ?—The Union has asked for it and the Agent has promised to give one, but we do not know when he is going to give it.

K-5420. You say, "In the machinery of the administration for the workmen's compensation the Union must be represented". Is there anything at the present time which debars the Union from assisting the applicant before the Commissioner under the Act ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : When we say "administration" we mean the Railway administration.

K-5421. Is there anything in the way which debars the Union from assisting the applicant before the Commissioner ?—Absolutely nothing. (*Mr. Madhar*) : The difficulty is that when accidents occur the administration sometimes make false reports and the compensation is considerably lessened.

K-5422. In such a case do you bring it to the notice of the Commissioner under the Act ?—We try to. (*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : When matters of dispute arise we ask that revised machinery should be set up between the Union and the employers.

K-5423. Are you in favour of a premium or bonus earning system wherever it is possible to introduce it ?—We are averse to the introduction of this system because it will involve the workmen in trouble. A man of 25 years of age is more efficient than a man of 45 years of age and the bonus system will bring trouble ; we are averse to its introduction.

K-5424. In your memorandum you indicate that you prefer the Rowan system ?—We prefer the Rowan bonus system to the Halsi Weir system.

K-5425. Under your present system you can save more time and get good money for it whereas under the Rowan system you get less money ?—It all depends on the basic rate to be fixed.

K-5426. Have you asked all the members working in the shops about this ?—Yes.

K-5427. How did you manage to get the information that they were all in favour of the Rowan system ?—The piece workers generally come and complain to us about the insufficiency of their earnings under the present system and from different calculations we have come to the conclusion that the Rowan system is more difficult for them.

K-5428. Have you taken a ballot in the shops on this point ?—No. (*Mr. Thoman*) : On the bonus system the calculation as to the time a job should take is made on the work of an unusually skillful man and not on the work of a man of average ability.

K-5429. Are any of you members of the staff committee ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : No ; we are the last persons to accept appointments on the staff committee.

K-5430. Are members of your Union members of the staff committee ?—(*Mr. Sarma*) : Some members of the Union were elected to these staff committees without their knowledge. They consulted the Union as to what they should do. We said "the union will come to a decision very soon and when the mandate is issued all of you should come out in a body". They were prepared to resign and some of them had already resigned on the ground that they were not satisfied with the committee.

K-5431. They have all resigned ?—No ; two members resigned yesterday at Bezwada.

K-5432. How can the refusal of the company to recognize the Union prevent you from proceeding with your activities ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : Because if the administration recognizes the Union they would collect the union dues through the pay sheets and that will be of assistance to us.

K-5433. Why have you not started these activities ? why should you wait for recognition ?—We would also point out that our Union is in its infancy.

K-5434. But your Union has been going for 10 years.—Yes (*Mr. Madhar*) : All these years we have been laying the foundations of this trade union and now the foundations are complete.

K-5435. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is it your idea that the Railway should collect the subscriptions of the members from the pay sheets ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : Not the subscriptions but the donations towards the mutual and benefit scheme as is done on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway.

K-5436. In reply to Mr. Cliff you said that these deductions worked great havoc and ought not to be permitted.—(*Mr. Madhar*) : That referred to debits and fines and that sort of things.

K-5437. The Railway has a mutual benefit society.—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : Yes.

K-5438. Do you suggest there should be two mutual benefit societies ?—The Railway's scheme does not include the menial staff. Deductions are made for the Co-operative Credit Society which is not entirely run by the administration but is run by the members of the Union as well.

K-5439. They lost a lot of money on the Co-operative Stores, did they not ?—Yes, we are making that up. It is entirely due to bad management ; it is now controlled by the Union representatives and it is improving day by day.

K-5440. *Mr. Sreenivasulu* : Have you anything to say with regard to victimization of Trade Union leaders and responsible office-bearers ?—(*Mr. Veerasami*) : A Train Examiner who was doing a lot of work for the Union was transferred to a place 200 miles away in the middle of a forest ; then he was taken away to a post at Poona. (*Mr. Fernandez*) : The Assistant Secretary of the Hubli Union was transferred. When the case was represented by the Union he was transferred back to his own place. (*Mr. Madhar*) : C. J. Samuel of the Signal Engineering Department was discharged for taking an active part in the Union.

K-5441. *Sir Alexander Murray* : If you have efficient officers and they are transferred from one place to another, do you not think they will spread the good news of trade unionism in those places to which they are transferred ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : But the motive behind the transfer is not good. (*Mr. Lakhshimnarayana*) : A clerk in the Engineering Department was reported by his Head Draftsman that he took an interest in the labour movement and the Union. The District Officer at once called for his explanation, not in writing but orally, and said he was going to transfer him to a distant place. As a matter of fact, he happened to be a Madrasi and by good luck he was transferred to Madras although the District Officer wanted to do him harm.

K-5442. How many of your Presidents and Vice-Presidents are actually railway people ?—(*Mr. Krishnamurti*) : One of the vice-presidents is an actual worker.

K-5443. *Mr. Cliff* : What is the position in the intervals between meetings of the Central committee ?—(*Mr. Sarma*) : The General Secretary is in charge of the office.

K-5444. He carries on ?—(*Mr. Madhar*) : Mr. Giri and the General Secretary with the assistance of some of the office-bearers who are in the inner circle such as the Secretary for Accounts and Finance and the Secretary for Publicity and Representation.

K-5445. Those are not decorative officials ?—No. We are seriously proposing this year not to entertain more outsiders in our Union because now the railwaymen themselves are educated with regard to the trade union movement and they can themselves become vice-presidents and lead the movement.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## (RAILWAYS)

## Ninetieth Meeting

(PANEL NO. 1.)

MADRAS.

Tuesday, 4th March, 1930.

## PRESENT :

Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt., C.B.E. (*Presiding*).

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Lieut.-Colonel A. J. H. RUSSELL,  
C.B.E., I.M.S. (*Medical Asses-*  
*sor*).

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

Mr. M. S. GREGORY, M.C, M.I.C.E.

Mr. R. SREENIVASALU.

} *Assistant Commissioners.*Mr. A. DIBDIN, *Joint Secretary.*


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Mr. P. ROTHERA, Agent, Mr. A. H. SMYTH, Chief Transportation Superintendent, Mr. H. A. REID, Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer, Dr. C. E. R. Norman, Chief Medical Officer, Mr. A. SRINIVASA IYER, Assistant Auditor, and Mr. P. GOVINDARAJ, Assistant Secretary to the Agent, representing the South Indian Railway.

K-5446. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is your experience ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : I have been very nearly 32 years on the railway, all of that time being on this Railway with the exception of 4 years war service in Mesopotamia. (*Mr. Smyth*) : I have been 24½ years on the South Indian Railway with the exception of four years war service. (*Mr. Reid*) : I have 15 years' service, all on the South Indian Railway except four years in Mesopotamia. (*Dr. Norman*) : I have 15½ years' service ; except three years in Mesopotamia my service has been entirely on this Railway. (*Mr. Srinivasa Iyer*) : I have 20 years' service all on this Railway. (*Mr. Govindraj*) : I have 11 years' service all on this Railway. I have been in the office and have been carrying on as Assistant Secretary to the Agent for nearly four years. I have frequently been on the line with the Agent.

K-5447. Yours is a State-owned railway worked by a company with a Board in England.—(*Mr. Rothera*) : Yes.

K-5448. What is your mileage ?—At present it is 2,363. We have both meter and broad gauge. We have 4 traffic and mechanical districts and seven engineering districts.



K-5449. How many permanent employees have you ?—35,425.

K-5450. Have you in addition any temporary or contractor labour ?—There is a lot of contractor labour.

K-5451. How many additional employees have you on the Railway who come under the name of temporary ?—A very small number ; I cannot give you the figure. I have a construction department at the present moment which is all temporary but there is practically no labour employed by us in it ; all the labour is contract labour.

K-5452. What is the extent of your contract labour ?—I have no idea. It varies almost from day to day. We have 3 constructions in progress at the present moment ; we have large works in progress at Trichinopoly, Erode and Madras all of which are being done on contract. I could not give you any idea of the amount of labour employed.

K-5453. You say the Railway has no control over contractor labour ; do you simply make a contract with some body at a rate per quantity and leave him to implement his contract as best as he can ?—That is right ; we have no control over his labour at all.

K-5454. You do not attempt to see that he pays what might be called a fair wage.—No ; I do not see how it will be possible to do so without going into his books ; I mean I do not know how we could enforce it if we had such a clause.

K-5455. You do not think it will be feasible to put into the contracts a clause saying that they must pay minimum rates ?—If it were in, it would be very difficult to enforce it ; we should have to check his books to see what he was paying.

K-5456. Then you feel there is no responsibility on you to see that he is not using what we should call sweated labour to any extent ?—I do not see that there is.

K-5457. *Mr. Cliff* : Apart from the enforcement of it, from your point of view, is there any objection to it being put in a contract ?—There is no practical difficulty about its being put in and there is no objection to it ; the putting it in would, however, make us responsible to see that it was enforced.

K-5458. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Would you feel justified in saying that the contractor should not employ women on certain work ?—Yes, we could do that ; we do that occasionally. I think I am right in saying that we do not carry women coolies on ballast trains.

K-5459. Would you agree that a clause may be put in prohibiting the employment of children under a certain age ?—Yes ; they do use children under a certain age in earth work for instance.

K-5460. *Colonel Russell* : Would you have any difficulty in inserting a clause in these agreements whereby the contractor would be compelled to supply decent housing, water supply and conservancy for his workers ?—We have that clause already. We recently revised our

contract forms on account of the big constructions we are carrying out ; our contracts specify that " the contractor shall provide and maintain at his own expense within the period such sanitary arrangements as may be considered necessary by the engineer and in the event of his failure to make such provision the engineer shall do so and the expense incurred shall be recovered from the contractor ".

K-5461. That does not include water or housing ; clause 13 makes no mention of water.—This is our standard form (handing same to the Commission).

K-5462. There has been a difficulty in one or two cases in getting water on your construction works ?—Yes, there has been.

K-5463. Would it impose an impossible condition on contractors in certain cases if you put such a provision in the agreement ?—I am afraid it might in certain cases.

K-5464. *Mr. Cliff* : Is there any co-ordination between the medical officer and the engineer in regard to the enforcement of these contracts ?—On a big construction or big works we generally put in an Assistant Surgeon and he works with the engineer.

K-5465. Are the plans dealing with the sanitation and the provision of shelter put before the Chief Medical Officer and do they have his approval ?—No, I think it is left mainly to the engineer.

K-5466. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Do you co-operate with the Government Medical Officer of Health in any way in that connexion ?—(*Dr. Norman*) : Yes.

K-5467. How many of your employees are earning under Rs. 15, Rs. 20 and Rs. 30 ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : The total number of employees, skilled and unskilled, drawing Rs. 15 and less is 17,718 ; the number drawing Rs. 30 and less is 27,371 ; this latter figure of course includes the previous figure.

K-5468. Do you pay grain compensation allowances ?—We are not paying it now ; it was withdrawn in 1921 when it was consolidated into the pay.

K-5469. Since 1921 you have not paid grain compensation allowance ?—No.

K-5470. The figure for wages given by you does not agree with the figure given in respect of your Railway by the Railway Board ; will you enquire into that matter ?—Yes.

K-5471. The Railway Board told us that they are not in a position, in establishment and labour questions, to impose their policy on the Company-managed railways but can only suggest reforms and improvements ?—That is so.

K-5472. To what extent do you feel yourselves bound morally or otherwise to follow the lead given by the Railway Board as regards improvement of labour conditions ?—The policy of my Board generally is to follow the policy of the Railway Board.

K-5473. Are there any cases in which you have differed from them and not followed their policy ?—The only one I can think of at the

present moment is with regard to the rent of quarters ; recently the Railway Board wanted to raise the return on capital cost of quarters to 4 per cent. The only way we could do it was to raise rents and my Board refused to do so. It is our policy generally to follow the Railway Board's policy.

K-5474. You say you accept the policy of the Government of India on the question of dealing with Trade Unions ?—Yes.

K-5475. Would you feel yourself bound by anything that the Government of India may do in regard to the negotiations with the Railway Federation Unions or matters of that description ?—We should not be bound by it but I think we should adopt it.

K-5476. A new statement has been issued lately as to the policy of the Railway Board in regard to dismissals and discharges ; would you feel justified in recommending to your Board that they should adopt those recommendations in their entirety ?—That at present is under consideration ; it has only just reached us and we have not come to any definite conclusion yet as to whether we should accept it in toto.

K-5477. That would also cover the question of appeals ?—Yes.

K-5478. As far as possible, you would follow their recommendations.—Yes.

K-5479. *Mr. Cliff* : How much time normally elapses between the decision of the Railway Board and the decision of your Board ?—I very frequently get orders from the Home Board before I can get them from the Railway Board on certain subjects. It depends very largely on the question but as a rule my Board do not question the policy of the Railway Board and we get their orders very quickly.

K-5480. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You do not tell us anything about the physique of your workers ?—(*Dr. Norman*) : I should say that the general physique of the workers taken as a whole is quite good.

K-5481. How does it compare with the physique of the people in the surrounding districts ?—It is better. I have opportunities for knowing that because sometimes I get cases brought up to me of men who, though physically quite fit, are thin. They have explained their condition by saying that they could not get work and had been starving. In such cases I have provisionally passed them as fit and ordered them to come for re-examination in three or six months time. One then sees a great difference in those men.

K-5482. Can you tell us the percentage of rejections in the medical examination for admission to the service ?—I could not tell you the percentage ; it is not very much. As a general rule men who are sent up for examination are in fairly good condition.

K-5483. *Mr. Cliff* : Their physique should be better if you only have selected men.—That is true.

K-5484. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you many cases of bribery ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : Not actual cases ; it is very difficult to detect cases because we cannot get men who come forward and substantiate it. Such matters are generally brought to notice by an anonymous petition but

when we make enquiries into it the men will not support it and they say they know nothing about it.

K-5485. Have you reduced or reprimanded any body on circumstantial evidence ?—No, not on circumstantial evidence.

K-5486. I think you have trade tests in the workshops ?—Yes, in order to grade a man's pay.

K-5487. You have no bonus system on the shops ?—No, not yet.

K-5488. In none of your shops have you a bonus system ?—No ; we have never had it. We are hoping to introduce a bonus system into the shops when the shops are ready for it but they are not yet sufficiently organized.

K-5489. Do your apprentices always stay and complete their apprenticeship ?—I think always.

K-5490. Do you find jobs for all of them ?—Yes ; we only take them on in accordance with the probable number of vacancies.

K-5491. In the shops who appoints the men ?—The Works Manager or Assistant Works Manager, always an officer.

K-5492. Then the Foreman tests the men ?—No, it is done by an officer.

K-5493. Do you say that no Chargeman, Foreman or Assistant Foreman has any authority to take on a man ?—None whatever.

K-5494. Can he recommend ?—He can recommend ; we cannot help that.

K-5495. Does he suspend ?—No. No Foreman has any authority to appoint, or punish or in any way interfere with the men in the shops.

K-5496. On the line has a Permanent Way Inspector power to suspend ?—In emergency he has power to appoint gang coolies subject to confirmation by his officer. He has powers to suspend but not to punish other than by suspension and that suspension is only in case of emergency. He has no powers of dismissal. The mechanical loco. Foremen have power to appoint menials, coal coolies and that sort of people but they have no power to punish ; that is all done by officers.

K-5497. Have you received many petitions with regard to bribery ?—No. They come occasionally when a man gets beyond what might be called the normal ; then the petitions begin to come in.

K-5498. Who actually grants leave to the workmen in the shop ?—The Works Manager or his assistant officer ; nobody below the rank of an officer.

K-5499. Who gives increments in the shops ?—The Works Manager ; that is confined to him.

K-5500. Supposing a man has cause for complaint in the shop on the ground of not receiving his increment or leave, to whom has he the right of appeal ?—His first appeal would be to the Works Manager.

K-5501. But you tell us it is the Works Manager who does these things ?—His first complaint would be to the Works Manager and then

his appeal would be to the head of the department, the Chief Mechanical Engineer.

K-5502. He must pass it through the Works Manager ?—Yes.

K-5503. We get complaints everywhere that the appeal must go through the person who has refused to give what is wanted and that in 99 per cent. of the cases the head of the department acts on the recommendation that comes up with the appeal from the Works Manager ?—I do not think they always do that. If the appeal went the other way round direct to the Chief Mechanical Engineer, the Chief Mechanical Engineer would have to pass it down to make enquiries. I think the head of the department makes his own enquiries ; but he need not necessarily accept the opinion of the officer below him. Under our punishment rules we definitely state that officers must be prepared to justify the infliction of any punishment when called upon to do so.

K-5504. Have you any objection to the unions helping a man to frame his appeal ?—No, no objection at all.

K-5505. Would you go as far as allowing a representative of the union to appear with him if he is to appear personally before the head of the department ?—No, I do not think I would object to that provided I was satisfied that the union could represent his case satisfactorily.

K-5506. *Mr. Cliff* : Are all these appeals in writing ?—Yes.

K-5507. There is no question of verbal appeals in workshops or among gang coolies who are illiterate ?—No, they generally represent in the form of a petition.

K-5508. *Sir Alexander Murray* : A staff welfare committee has just been appointed ?—Yes.

K-5509. Are you prepared in these staff welfare committees to have cases of individual grievances ventilated ?—No, not at present. In our memorandum where it says “ within certain limits personal grievances of the staff are ventilated and discussed at the meetings of these committees ” the word “ personal ” was not intended to mean “ individual ”. It would have been better if the word “ personal ” had been omitted. It was general grievances affecting the staff as a whole that was referred to.

K-5510. Would it not be better to deal with a grievance when it is still the grievance of an individual before it becomes a general grievance ?—I do not want these committees to deal with appeals against punishments and things of that sort in individual cases. If a section of men have any complaint, for instance, if the Guards have any complaint about their hours, that can be discussed. The difficulty in dealing with individual grievances is to distinguish between a grievance and what one might call an appeal.

K-5511. The Bengal-Nagpur Railway have given the committees the right to deal with the appeals. Why should you not do the same ?—We are proposing to appoint a staff personnel officer who will co-ordinate all this work ; when that officer is appointed, I then propose to let these committees deal with individual grievances.

K-5512. At present seven members of the staff committee are nominated and 8 are elected ?—Yes.

K-5513. Does that mean 15 *plus* a chairman ?—No including the chairman.

K-5514. So that the elected members, if they so desire, can out-vote the nominated members ?—Yes.

K-5515. Is the election by ordinary ballot ?—Yes, it is by balloting amongst the staff themselves.

K-5516. To your knowledge are there any members of trade unions on your present committees ?—I could not tell you. There is no objection to it.

K-5517. Would you welcome it ?—Yes, we do not mind ; the staff elect their own representative and we do not mind whether he is a member of the union or not.

K-5518. At the Golden Rock colony, you have a colony committee ?—Yes.

K-5519. Is that elected ?—Yes.

K-5520. Will you send us a copy of the constitution of the colony committee ?—Yes.

K-5521. From your memorandum it would appear that the colony committee is elected and constituted in pretty much the same way as at Madura ?—Very much the same, but I think it is a larger committee than the welfare committee. The Golden Rock colony is divided into wards like a municipality and each ward elects its own representative.

K-5522. You say : “ The District Officers’ Sanitary Committee at Madura, Villupuram and Podanur, which now deals with such questions as housing, water-supply, sanitation and health, should take over the functions of the welfare committee, so far only as these particular stations are concerned ”. Do you not mean that it should make over those functions to the welfare committees ?—That is what it should be. The sanitary committees in so far as the stations mentioned are concerned have been absorbed into the welfare committees.

K-5523. *Mr. Cliff*: In your memorandum you say—“ In the traffic department for appointment as booking clerks, parcel clerks, signallers, train-clerks, etc., students who have passed through a privately run training school at Trichinopoly which is recognized by the Company are given preference ”. What are the fees at the school ?—Rs. 60 for a course of 9 months.

K-5524. At what age do you employ them ?—Up to 25 years ; we do not appoint them below the age of 19 to 20.

K-5525. What improvement in methods of recruitment can you suggest with a view to preventing bribery ?—I wish I could suggest some method of improving it ; we try to check it as much as we can, but I cannot see any way out of it ; it is the custom of the country.

K-5526. I understood from your answers to Sir Alexander Murray that it is only officers who appoint.—With those exceptions that I have

mentioned, the Permanent Way Inspectors ; and those appointments are always subject to the approval of officers.

K-5527. Do you advertise for men ?—We do not need to advertise for men except with regard to specialist appointments.

K-5528. Have you a register of candidates ?—The department keeps a special register but every day we receive hundreds of applications. Some are registered and some are not ; it depends on the demand.

K-5529. Who is the person that registers applications ?—Generally it is done by the District Officers who have powers to appoint staff up to Rs. 100.

K-5530. I suppose the officer does not interview all these applicants.—He cannot register them all but if a likely application comes in, he will probably make a note of that application.

K-5531. I assume they must be interviewed by somebody below the District Officer ; have you any suggestion with regard to preventing any intervention between the applicant and the officer ?—I am afraid it is impossible ; we cannot prevent it.

K-5532. Has the Company taken steps to make it known to the men that they will take action against any person taking bribes and have the company advised the men not to give bribes ?—No, I do not think we have definitely.

K-5533. Is it definitely known to your people that, if they make a complaint against an officer taking a bribe, they will be in the position of being protected from any disciplinary action being taken by that officer in the future ?—I do not know whether they realise that ; they would be, if they would only come forward. In law, I believe I am correct in saying that the man who offers a bribe is regarded as being worse than the man who takes it.

K-5534. It has been put to me very strongly that it is due to fear.—I think there is a certain amount of fear behind them in not coming forward but I do not know how one can get rid of that fear.

K-5535. Could there not be more intensive propaganda amongst the work-people on this subject ?—We might do so, but there is always a danger then that they may bring up false cases and that, if they have a grudge against a man, they will accuse him of taking bribes. I have not found a method of preventing bribery during my 30 years' service.

K-5536. I suppose you do not say that canteens and shelters for the purpose of taking food are not necessary ?—No. For the present, we have nothing of the kind at Golden Rock, as we rather hoped the men could go home for food, but there is a demand for it and we have under consideration the erection of refreshment rooms there.

K-5537. What have the parents to pay for the fees of the scholars at the schools referred to in your memorandum under the heading, "Provision of educational facilities by employers ?—I will send in that information.

K-5538. What is the number of what are termed "menial staff" who are receiving less than Rs. 15 a month and are now contributing

to the provident fund ?—No body receiving less than Rs. 15 a month is contributing ; Rs. 15 a month is the minimum pay for contribution to the provident fund.

K-5539. Has advantage been taken of the extension of the benefits of the provident fund as from the 15th August 1928 to daily-rated men ?—They have to put in a minimum of 3 years' service, so that the number is not as yet very great ; 2,523 of the daily-rated staff are already contributing to the fund out of a total of 6,661 ; the remaining 4,000 have not yet completed the necessary 3 years' service.

K-5540. Is not three years rather a long period ?—This condition was laid down by the Railway Board when the application of the provident fund to daily-rated staff was sanctioned.

K-5541. When are these daily-rated staff confirmed in their appointments ?—I do not know that they are ever confirmed. They are technically considered as temporary until they have put in 3 years' service, so that I presume they are automatically confirmed at the end of three years.

*Mr. Gregory* : In practice they are considered permanent employees once they come on to the provident fund ; on State railways it is two years.

K-5542. *Sir Alexander Murray* : From what you say in your memorandum, it appears that the eligibility of this class of employees to subscribe to the Provident Fund is that those in service prior to 15th August 1928 should give up the right of absenting themselves without sanction for three days in any calendar month, a privilege which the daily-rated workmen enjoy ?—That is a relic which was brought over from Negapatam. Many years ago they used to get 6 days' leave a month without sanction. That was reduced to 3 and we had decided that when we came to Golden Rock we would try to get this abolished. We were the only Railway in India that had anything of the kind. At the request of the labour we put the matter to arbitration and the Labour Commissioner decided in favour of the men and against us on the ground that it was an old standing custom and we could not take it away from them. Those men who, during the strike in 1928, did not resign have been allowed to keep that 3 days or alternatively they can give it up and join the provident fund but they cannot do both. We had 693 men who had this privilege and at present there are only 47 left who have not yet joined the fund.

K-5543. Your workshop staff have Sundays, a half holiday on Saturdays, 15 days with pay and then 12 holidays with pay ?—Yes.

K-5544. That is to say they get 131 days holidays ?—There is no pay on Sundays and Saturday afternoons.

K-5545. They get 27 days holidays with pay ?—Yes.

K-5546. That was one of the reasons why you wanted to abolish this 3 days ?—That was one of the reasons. Another reason was that it was almost impossible to organize work properly, because a man would go away one morning and we did not know when he was coming back.



K-5547. Are you considering the leave rules of the Government of India ?—We have not had them yet.

*Mr. Gregory* : They were issued in the Gazette of the 22nd February 1930.

*The witness* : I have not yet seen them.

K-5548. *Sir Alexander Murray* : If a man goes away on 15 days' leave and does not return at the end of his leave, have you a right to dismiss him ?—Yes, under his agreement if he overstays his leave, he is liable to dismissal.

K-5549. Do you dismiss people in that way ?—Not necessarily ; it depends on the circumstances of the case ; we have no limit and it is very seldom that we do dismiss, merely for overstaying of leave.

K-5550. *Mr. Cliff* : Did you not accept the award of the arbitrator ?—Yes ; but circumstances changed subsequently. The men all resigned their appointments and were paid a handsome gratuity for doing so. If they came back again they did so on our terms.

K-5551. But you have still got two categories of men ?—We have got the men from Negapatam who did not resign ; they were the only men who were allowed to keep those 3 days under the award.

K-5552. What provision is there with regard to provident fund and gratuity for men under Rs. 15 per mensem ?—They all get gratuities.

K-5553. Will you give us examples of the gratuity which you regard as adequate for old age in the case of employees under Rs. 15 and under Rs. 30 ?—I will let you have figures showing what they will receive under the present rules.

K-5554. Are both these co-operative societies at Trichinopoly ?—Yes. I can send you last year's report.

K-5555. Referring to what you say in regard to hours of transportation department, running staff, the Union say in their memorandum : " At present the general rule for rest at headquarters obtaining on our railway is 8 hours in the traffic and 10 hours in the locomotive, even though the employee had worked two consecutive nights.....Even then minimum rest is much shortened by the employee in far off places from the seat of work for want of Company's quarters. On our railway the hours of work at one stretch by goods train and, in some cases, by the passenger and ballast trains is limited by the termination of the run which extends very often from 12 to 14 hours ". Do you accept that statement ?—I am afraid I do not. I sent the rest rules to the Secretary the other day, including revision of that rule which has recently been issued and which includes hours of rest at headquarters.

K-5556. Will a ballast train engine crew run from 12 to 14 hours at one stretch ?—They may be on duty from 12 to 14 hours at one stretch but they are not running anything like the whole time.

K-5557. How long is allowed for engine attendance ?—(*Mr. Reid*) : Three quarters of an hour at the beginning of the trip and a quarter of an hour at the end.

K-5558. Does it mean that a man may be driving the engine 12 hours ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : The ballast train is standing loading or unloading more

than half its time ; it is standing at stations more than half its time. It is the last train to receive precedence. The crew may be in charge of the engine from 12 to 14 hours but they are not working all that time.

K-5559. They are scheduled for duty and they are responsible for the engine during that time ?—Yes.

K-5560. You say : “ It should be noted that owing to the conditions under which the running staff are paid overtime and mileage allowances, the application of the two Conventions to this class would result in reducing emoluments. It has therefore been decided that for the present the Conventions should not be applied to them ”. What do you mean by “ for the present ” ?—It is under consideration as to how they are to be applied.

K-5561. It does not mean that a definite decision has been taken not to apply them.—No.

K-5562. It is complained that it is very difficult to obtain leave and to apply these rules because of your insufficient reserve staff. I do not think that is really quite fair. I know it is a general complaint but the trouble is principally due to the fact that they all want leave at the same time ; for instance at this time of the year, which is the marriage season, they are all demanding leave and we cannot carry a sufficient reserve of staff to cover peak demands like that. In the transportation department and practically all departments of that nature we carry about 14 to 18 per cent. relieving staff.

K-5563. Does it mean that a calendar year goes by and people are not able to obtain leave which is scheduled for them under the rule ?—If a man were to apply for leave in November and December, it is quite possible that that calendar year would go by before that man could be relieved.

K-5564. Have you men who have to go more than 12 months before they actually get their leave ?—Not if they apply in time.

K-5565. Have you had any cases brought to your notice where a man has not been able to obtain his leave owing to the fact that you have not sufficient reserve staff ?—We have had cases in rush periods but there is no difficulty in the slack season.

K-5566. *Mr. Joshi* : We asked the Railway Board whether racial discrimination existed and they said it existed once but does not exist now. Mr. Hayman made a statement in the Legislative Assembly that he pleaded guilty to the charge that there is racial discrimination even to-day in the workshops and on Company-managed railways. Was Mr. Hayman correct in making that statement ?—As far as the South Indian Railway is concerned, he was most certainly not.

K-5567. Do you make any distinction between Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians in giving passes ?—We have no distinction at all. These are our pass rules (handing same to the Commission).

K-5568. How many first class railway stations are there on your Railway ?—(*Mr. Smyth*) : 23.

K-5569. How many Indians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans are first class Station Masters ?—We will send in the information. There are several Indians in charge of first class stations.

K-5570. Do you make a distinction between Indians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans with regard to pay when they are commencing their railway service ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : None whatever

K-5571. Does a Ticket Collector, whether he is an Indian, an Anglo-Indian or an European, start on the same pay ?—I think that is quite correct ; they start on the same pay. We revised our rates of pay in 1926 removing all racial discrimination for every description of staff ; Drivers, Foremen, Guards, and so on are treated in the same way. We have no special pay for Indians, Anglo-Indians or Europeans ; they start on exactly the same pay and get exactly the same promotion.

K-5572. You say that relations between the managing staff and the railway employees may generally be termed friendly, but in another place you describe certain disputes. Have relations improved since the strike ?—I think they have improved and I think I am correct in saying that generally speaking relations are friendly.

K-5573. Does the strike take place because of bad relations ?—I think the last strike was forced upon the general staff who did not want a strike. It was the workshop people who were the cause of the trouble and that was of course the result of retrenchment. I did everything I could to use my influence with them before they struck.

K-5574. That makes me think that the relations were not perhaps as friendly as they were supposed to be ?—They are not as friendly as I would like them to be but I still consider they are friendly.

K-5575. What proportion of the staff get the sickness leave of which you speak ?—All the staff get sick leave.

K-5576. Are the daily-rated men entitled to sick leave ?—I think the daily-rated men do not get sick leave. All the monthly paid staff are entitled to sick leave. The daily-rated staff and the menials get leave on half pay. We have a large hospital in Golden Rock where the bulk of our daily-rated staff work. They are not paid when they are away.

K-5577. If Government starts a sickness insurance scheme, will your Railway object to paying a subscription as employers ?—I should like to put that point to my Board but I think I would not object. I think it would be a good thing if it were introduced ; that is my personal opinion. I would like to see a sickness insurance fund introduced.

K-5578. *Col. Russell* : You say you are in favour of the introduction of a sickness insurance scheme for your employees ?—I have not thought it out very closely but, speaking generally, I think it would be a good thing.

K-5579. You do not anticipate that in India it would be possible to provide medical facilities all over the country for people who are injured under a medical insurance scheme.—I have not gone into the question closely.

K-5580. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Why do you recognize the daily-rated workers of over 3 years' service as being eligible for provident fund by treating them as practically permanent men, and then not give them the same privilege with regard to sick leave ?—Daily-rated staff have always been treated differently from the permanent monthly paid staff. The

idea is that the daily-rated staff is a fluctuating staff which can be adjusted to suit the conditions or quantity of the work. The provident fund has only recently been sanctioned for daily-rated staff.

K-5581. Why do you not make them eligible for provident fund ?—I think the limit of Rs. 15 was laid down originally by the Railway Board.

K-5582. Is there any justification for it ?—I do not know why that specific limit was applied.

K-5583. If any scheme is proposed for providing for the old age of these people who get less than Rs. 15 a month, you think it is quite reasonable that the employers should contribute also.—Personally, I think so.

K-5584. To what extent has the cost of living increased during the period before the war and 1920 ?—I could not say ; enquiries were made at the time when these rates of pay were fixed, but I do not think we have any detailed figures. A slight reduction was made in 1924.

K-5585. Is it to be taken that there was a systematic enquiry into the cost of living when these standard scales were drawn up ?—Prior to 1924 there most certainly was ; I cannot say about 1920.

K-5586. Is there a record of that ?—There must be papers on the files on the subject ; the investigations were being made for some time before the new scales were brought in. I will look into these papers and see if there is anything which may be useful to you.

K-5587. *Mr. Joshi* : It is stated in the memorandum of the South Indian Railway Labour Union : “ There is a rule which empowers officers for awarding punishments without explanation or holding an enquiry provided the crime or mistake was committed in their presence or to their knowledge ”. Is there such a rule ?—I do not know of any rule that covers that.

K-5588. The Trade Union say “ Oftentimes the employees come to know of their punishments only through pay bills ” ?—I do not think that is correct ; I do not think it is possible ; they are always advised if they are fined. Occasionally a man may be fined on the 1st day of the month which actually takes effect only when he receives his pay in the middle of the following month when he and probably the officer also have forgotten all about the incident.

K-5589. The Trade Union says that the facilities for education of children of Indian employees are not so good as those provided by the Company for children of Anglo-Indians ?—I think that is a correct statement ; our educational policy for many years has been to provide facilities where no other facilities exist. We have a colony at a place called Villapuram, which is a hundred miles from here ; there are Indian schools there but there are no Anglo-Indian schools. We have a number of Anglo-Indian Drivers with children and naturally we provided an Anglo-Indian school. There is a school for Indians in the town.

K-5590. *Mr. Cliff* : Is it equally accessible ?—Yes. At Golden Rock we have our own Indian schools because there are no other such facilities of any sort.

K-5591. *Col. Russell* : What is your general policy as to the housing of your employees at Golden Rock ?—At Golden Rock we are endeavouring to house the whole of the artisan staff and upwards. We do not propose to house the coolie staff because the idea was that they would be obtained locally and would come from the neighbouring villages and Trichinopoly town itself.

K-5592. The memorandum submitted by the Labour Union refers to housing conditions of the Railway employees at centres like Madras, Madura, Calicut and Salem. What are the proposals of the Railway with regard to those centres ?—We try to house the staff whose duties necessitate their living near their work, and in the event of quarters being available such staff gets preference.

K-5593. And that is all ?—That is all.

K-5594. With reference to the figures as to money spent on housing, which are given in your memorandum, will you let us have a statement as to the amounts spent and proposed to be spent on houses for the lower class of employees, on bungalows, and so on ?—I will send in those figures.

K-5595. I understand you have already sent in type plans of your standardized houses ?—Yes.

K-5596. You say the mortality is 7.5 per thousand of your general staff. That is a very low figure ?—(*Dr. Norman*) : To begin with, our employees are picked men. Secondly, their ages vary between 20 and 55.

K-5597. These figures refer to a selected population ?—(*Dr. Norman*) : Yes.

K-5598. Have you not got a complete record of registration of births, deaths, and so on, in the Golden Rock Colony ?—I believe the Colony Officer has them.

K-5599. Because you say there are no figures available ?—It is a very difficult thing to get a report of a birth, people will not report their births ; only our Sanitary Inspectors and sweepers going round the place are able to find out whether there has been a birth in any place.

K-5600. So that the figures you have would not give any correct idea ?—No.

K-5601. The Labour Union in their memorandum say that the estimated cost of living of a man, his wife and three children is Rs. 35 per month in the mofussil, Rs. 40 in the towns, and Rs. 45 in the Presidency towns. Would you accept those figures as being reasonable minima ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : I am afraid we have not gone into that question.

K-5602. You say you can give no reliable answers as to physique, but you must have some standards with regard to the general physique of your Railway employees ?—(*Dr. Norman*) : Yes ; you may have a man who is physically fit, *i.e.*, has no organic disease, but he may have a poor standard of physique owing to want of food. We generally try to get the best we possibly can and we do not accept men with obvious defects.

K-5603. How many Assistant Surgeons and Sub-Assistant Surgeons have you ?—8 Assistant Surgeons and 35 Sub-Assistant Surgeons.

K-5604. You say the Railway maintains well equipped dispensaries. How many does it maintain ?—29.

K-5605. You say : " At the new colony at Golden Rock a modern hospital has been established with adequate nursing and medical staff and all appurtenances relating thereto ". How many beds are there ?—45.

K-5606. How many are for Europeans and how many for Indians ? —There is no differentiation.

K-5607. It depends on what patients may come in ?—Yes.

K-5608. How many nurses are there ?—Four.

K-5609. Have you any lady medical officer ?—No.

K-5610. Have you any health visitors ?—No.

K-5611. Have you any *dais* ?—We have one *dai* for Golden Rock colony and one for Vallipuram.

K-5612. You say the attendance by women is not to the same extent. If you had a lady medical officer, perhaps a health visitor and one or two *dais*, do you think the attendance of women might improve ?—The *dai* at present takes the place of a lady visitor. Personally I think if we had a woman doctor on the Railway it would be appreciated by the female relatives of the staff.

K-5613. How many hospitals have you on the Railway in addition to Golden Rock ?—We have an accident ward at Podanur and another at Madura, and at most of our dispensaries we have a bed on which any man who has been badly injured can be kept for at least 24 hours.

K-5614. Have you any maternity beds ?—Yes, at Golden Rock.

K-5615. But no lady medical officer ?—No ; but we have got a *dai* to attend to them.

K-5616. In the memorandum of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway it is stated that for those drawing over Rs. 30 per month there were hospital stoppages. Have you such a system ?—Yes.

K-5617. What is the total of hospital stoppages for the year 1929 ?—Roughly 25 per cent. of the people admitted to the Golden Rock hospital had hospital stoppages.

K-5618. At Golden Rock hospital are you going to build a larger and better out-patient department ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : Yes, that is under consideration now ; the present place is too small.

K-5619. Have your District Medical Officers any qualification in public health ?—(*Dr. Norman*) : No.

K-5620. Then do you not think it would be a good thing if they had ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : We have just brought in a regulation making it compulsory for all District Medical Officers to have the D. P. H. That is to say they start on a pay of Rs. 500, and when they reach the grade of Rs. 750 there is an efficiency bar until they get a public health qualification.

K-5621. Do you think these District Medical Officers will have the time to do public health work in addition to all the general practical work which they have to do ?—(*Dr. Norman*) : Yes.

K-5622. Would it not be better if you had a separate public health officer doing all public health work ?—I hold a diploma in Public Health and I am responsible for enquiring into all questions of that sort.

K-5623. I take it you have a considerable quantity of other work to do ?—Yes.

K-5624. Apparently you have an officer in charge of conservancy. Would it not be worth-while having a whole time Medical Officer of Health for the colony considering its size ?—Yes. I think it is a matter well worth consideration.

K-5625. A considerable amount of evidence has been received from other railways that the eyesight tests to which the employees have to submit are strict and rigid. Do you use the Edridge Green apparatus ?—At Golden Rock, for two districts, yes.

K-5626. When a District Medical Officer decides that an employée is suffering from some eyesight defect which was not there a year or two before, can the employee appeal to the Chief Medical Officer ?—Yes.

K-5627. How many such appeals did you have last year ?—Three.

K-5628. Was it possible in many cases for you to revise the decision ?—In one case the District Medical Officer thought there might be an appeal, and as there had been an accident he wanted my opinion before the man was dealt with. I said the man might be passed. In two other cases both men were suffering from grave defects, and the decision of the Medical Officer was upheld.

K-5629. In a case where there is a certain amount of doubt do you consult an ophthalmic specialist ?—Yes.

K-5630. In all cases of that kind I suppose a man might be reduced in grade and pay ?—That is a matter which is not within my purview. A Guard who is suffering from defective eyesight and therefore unfit, might prefer to continue in the service as a Ticket Collector.

K-5631. So that in actual practice there would be a reduction in pay ?—Yes.

K-5632. How many Sanitary Inspectors do you employ on the Railway ?—7.

K-5633. Are they all qualified ?—Four are qualified and three are not.

K-5634. Where are they stationed ?—Conoor, Villapuram, Podanur, Golden Rock, Madura, Trichinopoly and Dhanushkodi.

K-5635. I take it they are responsible for the conservancy in those stations ?—They work under the Medical Subordinate in charge of the place.

K-5636. You say : " All workplaces and Company's quarters are provided with suitable latrines built on the latest and modern designs ". Have you any septic tank latrines ?—No ; in two places we experimented with aqua privies.

K-5637. What type are you referring to when you say that they are of the latest and modern designs ?—I am referring to Golden Rock. We have many types of latrines on this Railway. Our policy is that as money is available we should get rid of the old latrines and replace them by latrines that will be of standard pattern.

K-5638. But in Golden Rock they are all flush out latrines ?—Yes, they are all modern.

K-5639. You say : “ drinking water is provided wherever possible ”. Is that sufficient ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : The phraseology here seems to be a little unfortunate. It is possibly not very well worded. I think it means a pipe supply is provided wherever possible. Otherwise there are wells. We provide wells where there is no pipe supply.

K-5640. Have you bathing and washing facilities in the workshops ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : They have washing facilities in the Golden Rock shops.

K-5641. In workshops, particularly during the hot weather, a general complaint has been made that the drinking water is too hot to drink. You will probably agree that hot water is disagreeable in the hot weather ?—Yes.

K-5642. Do you think it is a reasonable thing to ask for cooled water for the workshop workers ?—This is the first time I have heard of this complaint.

K-5643. That may be due to the fact that Trichinopoly is not so warm as other places, but a pipe supply usually gets fairly hot ?—Yes, I will look into and see what can be done.

K-5644. Is any anti-malarial work being done on the Railway ?—(*Dr. Norman*) : We have no Malariologist.

K-5645. Have you any unhealthy stations ?—Only two or three stations.

K-5646. I take it that when you say a station is unhealthy it means that there is malaria there ?—Yes.

K-5647. What proposals, if any, are being made to improve the health conditions in these unhealthy stations ? (*Dr. Norman*) : As far as one place is concerned, it is very difficult to carry out any anti-malarial measures because it is a small colony and we are surrounded by people who do not keep their places in good order. We get most of our infection from them and people who own coconut plantations. The only thing we have been able to do so far is to treat actual cases when they occur and not keep people there for a long time if they are badly infected. We have tried prophylaxis.

K-5648. You do not think any special anti-malarial work is necessary ?—(*Dr. Norman*) : We are getting very little malaria on the Railway.

K-5649. The memoranda of both the Railway Unions say that medical certificates from general practitioners are not accepted. What is the difficulty ? The difficulty is that we cannot rely upon these certificates ; they are unreliable.

K-5650. I suppose some of them are false ?—They are.

K-5651. Has an employee any appeal against the non-acceptance of a medical certificate if he is at a place at a considerable distance from the nearest Railway Medical Officer ?—In these cases the certificates are accepted. Occasionally we try to check them. For instance a man was on 7 days' privilege leave, and a letter came in from a private medical practitioner saying the man was suffering from kidney trouble, high blood pressure and various troubles of that sort, and needed three months' rest



As the employee had only 18 months' service I suggested that as his disease was of such a chronic character his services might be dispensed with. He promptly returned and there was nothing the matter with him.

K-5652. Are certificates of L. M. P.'s accepted ?—Yes.

K-5653. You do not think it is necessary to have, as one trade Union has suggested, an independent medical referee ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : No, I do not think so.

K-5654. What do you do in a case of the character which you have just described ?—(*Dr. Norman*) : What actually happened in that case was that the man was given a good fright and taken back in the department.

K-5655. Do you have first-aid boxes for all workshops and running sheds ?—Yes.

K-5656. Is it obligatory for all supervisory staff to pass in first-aid ?—Yes.

K-5657. But do you encourage other staff to attend classes and how many have attended any classes you have had ?—Our difficulty is to encourage the staff with regard to whom it is obligatory to pass in first-aid to attend.

K-5658. Some years ago when I was here there was tremendous keenness about this ?—You get enthusiasm for a particular subject and then it dies away ; I am afraid we have not got the same enthusiasm now. Three or four months ago the Committee considered the question of reorganizing the whole of the teaching of first-aid.

K-5659. Do you give a bonus for passing examinations ?—Yes. certain classes get a bonus.

K-5660. Which classes ?—Running staff ; I think it is Rs. 15 and over-time.

K-5661. One of the Unions complains that passing the first-aid course is compulsory before certain appointments can be made ?—Up to a certain point I think that is so.

K-5662. *Mr. Cliff* : When we were at Golden Rock the other day we found that a man with first-aid knowledge was only there for a limited number of hours in the morning ; is that the regular practice ?—Yes, he is there from 7 o'clock in the morning till 12 o'clock.

K-5663. Do accidents only occur during that period ?—No, but we have our supervising Foremen who are supposed to be capable of attending to these accidents. It is a temporary dispensary as well as a first-aid station.

K-5664. *Sir Alexander Murray* : The Union says that daily paid men in the workshops are not allowed free treatment ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : That is not correct at all.

K-5665. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : Is there a rule which prescribes the following certificate before certain goods can be bought outside India : " I hereby certify that there are in the Company's possession no articles which can, by conversion or otherwise, be utilised instead, that the stores cannot be procured from any industry or guaranteed Railway, and that

similar articles of proper quality and price cannot be obtained from Indian manufacturers" ?—I believe that is correct ; that is a certificate which has to be signed by the indenting officer.

K-5666. Is it not possible for you to manufacture all these articles now in the workshop itself ?—No. We might be able to do it for a month, but not in large quantities.

K-5667. The Union says it is possible ?—I am afraid the Union is not correct.

K-5668. Were you not manufacturing all these things in the workshop before ?—No, not all of them, not all the full quantity. We may manufacture a certain number of all the articles mentioned but not all the quantity that is required on the Railway. We manufacture whatever we can.

K-5669. *Sir Alexander Murray* : I suppose during the war you had to manufacture things in your shops which you would not otherwise have manufactured ?—Yes, certainly ; but normally we do manufacture what items we can in our own shops ; but if we are laying hundreds of miles of line we cannot deal with that in the shops as one order ; it is too much for their capacity.

K-5670. *Mr. Sreenivasulu* : Do you erect locomotives in the shops ?—Sometimes we do and sometimes we do not.

K-5671. Does it cost more or less to obtain locomotives from Home ?—So far as our experience has shown there is practically no difference ; it is Rs. 100 or Rs. 200 in favour of the engine sent out complete. There is no difference in cost, but of course the engine that comes out complete is put into service earlier than the engine which is erected in the workshops.

K-5672. In 1919 for 295 men you spent Rs. 56,000 ; in 1927 for 1,087 men, which is three or four times as many, you spent Rs. 3,29,000 in wages ?—I do not know what the figures quoted refer to and I cannot give any explanation of them.

K-5673. Do you not think daily-rated staff require more leave ?—The daily-rated staff get quite good leave now. They get 27 days a year.

K-5674. Fifteen days is leave and 12 days is holidays ?—Yes.

K-5675. Fifteen days is casual leave ?—They get pay for that.

K-5676. How many holidays without pay do they have ?—I do not think there is any limit to that. Of course they get 52 Sundays.

K-5677. What is the average number of days that the daily-rated staff work in a month ?—26.

K-5678. If new rules regarding leave are introduced by the Railway Board, will you agree to introduce those rules on your Railway ?—I have not seen the rules yet and I cannot say.

K-5679. I suppose your Board is against it ?—Then I shall not be allowed to accept it.

K-5680. You say : " There are, I fear, many cases in which the subordinates who are authorised to recruit take bribes from the men they

employ ". It appears from that that you allow subordinates to recruit ?—I have already told Sir Alexander Murray what is meant by that.

K-5681. Do you allow officers to recruit men on the recommendation of the subordinates ?—The subordinates may recommend, yes. In the workshops all tests are carried out by an officer. Inspectors have power to appoint menials, subject to the approval of the officer.

K-5682. In a running shed is it not the practice for a fitter to be tested by the Foreman ?—(*Mr. Reid*) : Possibly it is in a running shed, but a man is always liable to be re-tested by an officer on his first inspection.

K-5683. Would you be in favour of a public employment bureau, controlled by a joint committee consisting of two representatives of the public, two representatives of the Union and two from the administration ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : I do not think it would be possible in railway work to have a public employment bureau, because the work is too technical. I doubt whether it would stop corruption.

K-5684. Supposing you left this problem of stopping favouritism and bribery to the Union ?—I should certainly be glad of any assistance the Union can give in this matter.

K-5685. Have you ever consulted the Union as to how to stop this corruption ?—No.

K-5686. But you will do so in future ?—Yes.

K-5687. In your memorandum when you speak of Indians, are you including Anglo-Indians ?—Yes, an Anglo-Indian is a statutory Indian.

K-5688. Have you any definite rule as to promotion ?—No, we have no definite rule. Merely because a man is standing at the top of the list he will not necessarily be promoted ; he is however normally.

K-5689. Why not you leave the formation of staff committees to the Union ?—The Union does not represent the whole of the staff.

K-5690. Do you not think that if you help the Union by granting them all the facilities which you grant to the staff committees the Union would become more representative ?—There is no objection to a member of the Union becoming a member of a welfare committee if the staff themselves elect him.

K-5691. Have you any objection to the welfare staff committees being controlled by the Union ?—Yes, I have.

K-5692. Would you prefer that a grievance should be put through the Union or through the staff committee ?—I do not mind which way it comes. I am prepared to hear it from both sides.

K-5693. If there are two independent bodies, one controlled by the administration and the other controlled by the employees themselves, do you not think they are likely to be rivals of one another ?—No, I do not think so.

K-5694. Do you not think the officers use their official power and authority over such committees ?—One of the principal objects of these welfare committees is to obtain and retain the personal touch between the officers and the staff. That is why we have put the officers on these committees. Also through these welfare committees we want to get the officers to instruct the staff as to how to put up their grievances.

K-5695. If you grant all these facilities to the Union by holding meetings, issuing free passes to attend meetings and so on, and if the Union then becomes a really representative body, will you be ready to abolish the staff committees ?—No, there is room for both.

K-5696. *Mr. Gregory* : Last week a Panel of the Commission visited Golden Rock and examined five of your workmen as witnesses. One of those witnesses definitely said that in his agreement of service there was a clause which stipulated that an employee should not join a Union. Do workshop employees have to sign an agreement ?—Yes. It has been introduced recently for the daily-rated staff because of their admission to the provident fund.

K-5697. In what language is that agreement ?—English.

K-5698. Is there any clause prohibiting the men from joining a Union ?—No, nothing of the kind.

K-5699. Have you ever considered printing that agreement in Tamil or some other language which they will be able to read and understand ?—No, it is a point which has never been raised before ; I think it is well worth considering. I think it should be printed in Tamil.

K-5700. In the oral examination of those witnesses they one and all said in reply to a question that it was not possible to approach an officer if they had a grievance. Have you ever considered any special machinery by means of which such grievances could be taken straight to the officer without going through the Foreman ?—We have ; I have had it under consideration for some time, that we should appoint another Personnel Officer for the workshops alone to deal with those questions of grievances and to deal with all questions of leave, generally to start a sort of Railway employees bureau in the shops themselves. I have not put it forward yet, but we have had it under consideration. It is a fact that the technical officers have not the time to go thoroughly into these things.

K-5701. You have no actual machinery-by means of which an employee can bring his report direct to an officer ; at present he must go through his Foreman ?—No ; when the officer is walking round the shops the man can go up to him and tell him his grievance, whatever it is.

K-5702. At present they are afraid to do that ?—That is the trouble ; in actual practice they will not do it.

K-5703. When you have this Personnel Officer is it your intention that it shall be possible for them to go direct to the Personnel Officer ?—Yes.

K-5704. He will be unbiassed ?—Yes.

K-5705. The officer would get the grievance without it going through the Foreman and the Foreman would not necessarily know which individual had made the complaint ?—Not necessarily.

K-5706. You have not actually had sanction for the Personnel Officer yet ?—No ; it has gone Home to the Board and its consideration has been deferred pending the result of this Commission. I did not recommend that ; I asked for sanction for it but that was the Board's decision.

F-5707. *Mr. Cliff* : I think it might be made clear that the Chairman, Mr. Whitley, has asked that any ameliorative measures should not have to

await the report of this Commission and that should stop no progressive work ?—I will take that up with the Board again.

K-5708. *Mr. Gregory* : You mention that this Personnel Officer would work actually in the workshops, but you are not going to restrict his scope of work ?—The workshop proposal is in addition to the general Personnel Officer.

K-5709. You say : “ Those who absent themselves for longer periods are liable to dismissal, an entry being made in the service sheets in cases where dismissal is considered too severe. Each case is, however, decided on its merits.” Who is the authority to decide a case like that on its merits ? —The officer who appoints.

K-5710. In the case of workshops men it would be the Works Manager?—Yes.

K-5711. You say you have no system of payment by piece-work or on contract. Have you any objection to introducing the piece-work system ?—Yes, personally I do not like the piece work system. We have under consideration introducing a bonus system for each individual shop as a whole so that every man in the shop shall benefit by the shop out-turn ; we are not in a position to introduce that yet.

K-5712. You say : “ all Railway labour is paid by cashiers employed by the Audit department ”. Is there anybody who witnesses the payment ?—In the case of illiterates, yes, always. There is the shop Foreman or inspector. On the line it would be the inspector while at wayside stations it is the Station Master.

K-5713. At any time is an officer present during payment ?—No, not normally.

K-5714. I suppose he can attend ?—Yes.

K-5715. Your memorandum says : “ The provident fund and gratuity combined make adequate provision for old age. These are payable in the case of premature retirement.” Is no minimum period specified ?—We have no minimum period for premature retirement. In the case of retrenchment, accident, or sickness the man gets the gratuity he has earned.

K-5716. You have given the rest periods at out-stations. Is it to be taken that a similar rest is given at the home stations ?—Yes.

K-5717. Or is it a bigger amount ?—It depends on the run the man has done. The circular which I have handed in shows the rest hours at home stations.

K-5718. With regard to bonus and profit sharing schemes you say : “ No scheme of this nature has been tried ; such schemes would be difficult to devise in connection with Railway working ” ?—I mean Railway working generally as apart from workshops.

K-5719. At present you do use the bonus system because you use it for the running staff ?—(*Mr. Smyth*) : Guards get mileage and Drivers get overtime.

K-5720. That statement is not quite correct ?—(*Mr. Rothera*) : No, these payments are really looked upon as allowances. We have it in the

workshop, but I have never been able to think out a bonus scheme for general service.

K-5721. If the minimum wages of the lowest paid staff were increased to any considerable extent, what do you think would be the effect?—Apart from any question of raising rates and fares one effect undoubtedly would be a reduction in the number of men employed; that is to say the railways would use more mechanical means than they do at present. I think Golden Rock may be taken as an example of that, where by introducing better mechanical methods we have reduced our labour force by half and more than doubled our output. At various times we have had other schemes under consideration for mechanical appliances, such as in connection with the handling of coal which to us is a very expensive item.

K-5722. Do you mean that you would economize to a great extent?—Yes, to a very much greater extent.

K-5723. *Mr. Cliff*: And in fact you are doing that?—Yes we are, gradually, even under present conditions.

K-5724. Has anything been done to apply what the Railway Board have recommended with regard to the lower paid grades?—Not at present, no.

K-5725. Is there any proposal to increase it to a higher minimum?—Not at present; we have no difficulty in obtaining men at those rates.

K-5726. Are you satisfied that they can obtain a decent standard of living on those rates?—I think they can live up to their usual standard on those rates of pay.

K-5727. Do you think that is a satisfactory standard?—It is what they have been accustomed to.

K-5728. *Sir Alexander Murray*: The Union suggest that employees should only be discharged by the head of the department. Your agreement says that the authority which appoints him has power to dismiss him. The Union's suggestion is going beyond anything you are prepared to consider?—Yes; I think the officer who has power to appoint should have power to dispense with the services of the men whom he appoints.

K-5729. How many appeals have come from the head of the department up to the Agent and been reversed?—During 1929, 65 appeals came up to the Agent, of which 11 were reversed in favour of the applicant. Those were appeals against all sorts of decisions.

K-5730. In how many cases have you dismissed men owing to attachments having been made against them by the court for indebtedness?—I cannot give you any figures, but the number is very small; it is only done in cases where men have the handling of cash. I will give you a statement later on on this matter.

K-5731. *Mr. Sreenivasalu*: At the time of the strike how many men did you retrench?—3,000 odd.

K-5732. Have you retrenched any supervisory staff, Chargemen and Foremen?—We have had to increase our supervisory staff; we have more shops than we had before. We have reduced the number of Chargemen. At present we have 100 more men in the Golden Rock shops than we estimated we should require previous to the strike.

K-5733. *Sir Alexander Murray* : As far as possible are you absorbing the men who have been dismissed ?—Yes.

K-5734. One Union suggests that where men have been dismissed or retrenched you ought to employ them instead of contractors on construction work ?—I am afraid I cannot.

K-5735. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : You do not consider the medical certificates issued by private doctors or Government doctors as reliable in all cases ?—We consider them but we do not always accept them.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**Mr. T. V. K. NAIDU, Mr. S. MOHAN SWARNA and Mr. MUDALA-MUTHU MUDALIAR**, representing the South Indian Railway Labour Union, Trichinopoly.

K-5736. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Are you authorized to appear on behalf of the South Indian Railway Labour Union ?—(*Mr. Naidu*) : Yes.

K-5737. The resolution said that four other gentlemen were to represent the Union ?—They are all absent.

K-5738. Are you appearing on behalf of the Union's memorandum ?—I am appearing on behalf of my own memorandum.

K-5739. What are you ?—I am the Secretary of the Union at Trichinopoly.

K-5740. You yourself are a clerk in the Chief Auditor's office ?—Yes.

K-5741. How long have you been on the Railway ?—Nearly 19 years on the South Indian Railway. Mr. Mohan Swarna is a labourer in the Golden Rock shop. Mr. Mudalamuthu Mudaliar is a brakesman in the Nilgiri Railway ; he has been on the line for 12 years.

K-5742. When was your Union registered ?—It is not registered.

K-5743. When was it formed ?—Ten years ago.

K-5744. Have you been recognized by the Railway ?—Yes, but they withdrew recognition after the strike of 1928.

K-5745. How many members have you now ?—There is no Union now ; the Union is not working. Another Union has recently been started by Mr. Kirk, called the South Indian Central Labour Union, Coimbatore. That was started two or three months ago.

K-5746. So, that is the only active Union on the South Indian Railway ?—It is not active. It has just been started.

K-5747. You were affiliated to the All-India Railwaymen's Federation and to the Trade Union Congress ?—Yes.

K-5748. The views expressed in your memorandum are your own views ?—With the concurrence of some of the labourers in the Golden Rock shops.

K-5749. When men are recruited, is the officer or the Foreman responsible for the test ?—The Foreman.

K-5750. You think the actual test is made by the Foreman ?—Yes.

K-5751. And that he recommends to the officer what rate of pay the man ought to get ?—Yes.

K-5752. The Railway management said that there was always an officer actually present and he was the officer who was really responsible for doing this ?—No, it was the Foreman himself. The officer is not present.

K-5753. I understand there used to be 7 days' leave in a month, but it was cut down to three days ?—Yes.

K-5754. Now I understand it has been eliminated entirely ?—Yes ; we protest about that.

K-5755. Do the workmen in the shops not get 15 days' leave and 12 days' public holidays, that is, 27 holidays altogether with full pay ?—Yes. This leave is specially granted in case of death in his own house or of relatives or things of that kind. The existing practice in the Golden Rock shop is that if a man's child dies he must leave the child in the house, go to the workshop, write an application to the Foreman for leave, which the Foreman sends to the officer ; all this takes some time before he can get his leave.

K-5756. Do you know of any case of a death where there was a trouble of that description ?—Yes ; the corpse may be lying in the house while the man is at the shop ; an application for leave must be sent in ; it goes to the clerk, then to the officer in charge and then to the senior officer. The senior officer may have a big bundle of papers waiting for him for signature and he may have to dispose of many other matters before he deals with the application for leave.

K-5757. You say appeals are not properly dealt with ?—Yes ; if I send an appeal to the Agent he refers to the officer against whose decision I am appealing and of course the officer merely confirms his original order.

K-5758. But he does not always confirm it ?—In the majority of cases he does confirm. The appeal should not be dealt with by the officer against whose decision the appeal is made.

K-5759. Will it meet your case if there is a special employment officer appointed ?—Yes. This should be tried.

K-5760. Appeals will be handled by the Personnel Officer ; would that meet your objections ?—Yes. This should be tried.

K-5761. Do you know of any cases in which employees who have been acquitted of offences have not been re-instated by the Company ?—Yes. In the recent S. I. Railway conspiracy case three persons were acquitted by the Sessions Judge at Trichinopoly, but they were not re-appointed.

K-5762. Why were they not re-appointed ?—The Agent knows that.

K-5763. Have you any experience of Welfare Committees ?—No. We have not any welfare committees at Trichinopoly.

K-5764. You do not know anything about the committees at the other four places ?—No.

K-5765. You are at Golden Rock ?—(Mr. Mohan Swarna) : Yes. I was a member of the Colony Committee.



K-5766. Why did you resign ?—I am under trial in the conspiracy case.

K-5767. What has been your experience of the committee when you were on it ?—The difficulty is that the Officer is the President of that committee.

K-5768. I understand that on these committees there are 15 members of whom 8 are elected and 7 are nominated ?—Yes.

K-5769. Therefore if the works committees elect suitable representatives they can always carry the committee ?—(*Mr. Naidu*) : The 8 elected members are subordinates of the officer who is the president and they cannot ventilate their grievances boldly in the presence of their officers.

K-5770. Why should they not, if the officer invites them to sit with him in the Committee ?—There will be a time ; there should be equal opportunities for employees and employers to talk freely.

K-5771. Instead of that committee what do you suggest ?—The existing Unions will be sufficient for it.

K-5772. But there is no Union now ?—A Union was formed recently. If you want welfare committees let all the officers be eliminated and let the elected members themselves choose the president. The president should be one of the elected members.

K-5773. You say there are many cases in which compensation has not been claimed ; why does the Union not take action in cases of that kind in order to help the workers ?—They are also taking action.

K-5774. What do you mean when you say the wages are far below the prevailing rates elsewhere ?—Outside, in the town, in shops not belonging to the Railway, workmen get higher wages ; if a fitter works in a business firm for a private concern he gets more than they get at the shops.

K-5775. In the private concerns, do they have provident fund, gratuity benefit, leave, and all the benefits they have on the Railway ?—Yes, they get gratuity, leave, etc.

K-5776. *Mr. Cliff* : At Golden Rock the station committee is to be the welfare Committee ?—Yes.

K-5777. How many of the work-people on the Golden Rock colony are members of the Station Committee ?—Three labourers are on the Committee.

K-5778. Are those three labourers all out of the shop ?—Yes.

K-5779. Does that mean that three labourers represent something over 7,000 men out of that shop ?—Yes.

K-5780. They have to represent the grievances of the work-people in that shop ?—No, the Colony Committee will only deal with matters of sanitation, etc., concerning the colony.

K-5781. The Agent tells us in his memorandum that the Colony Committee at Golden Rock will function as a staff welfare committee ?—Yes.

K-5782. Are there only three labourers in the shop who sit on that committee ?—Yes.

K-5783. Are they nominated or elected ?—They are elected by the men in the shop residing in the colony.

K-5784. You have now started to re-organize the Union ?—Yes.

K-5785. Is there a separate branch at Trichinopoly ?—Yes.

K-5786. Is the Trichinopoly branch related to the branch at Madura ?—Yes.

K-5787. Is there any relation between those two branches and this Central Labour Union at Coimbatore ?—No, there is no connection ; this was recently started after the strike.

K-5788. Are those the only two organizations ?—Yes. There are even more.

K-5789. When we were at Golden Rock the work-people whom we saw said they were afraid to join the Union for fear of being victimized. Have you anything to say with regard to that ?—Yes, there are a lot of such instances.

K-5790. Are you attempting to organize the work-people now ?—Yes, but we are implicated in this case ; if we are acquitted we will organize the Union or join the newly started Union.

K-5791. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Are you working now ?—No. (*Mr. Mohan Swarna*) : No. (*Mr. Mudaliar*) : I am working.

K-5792. *Mr. Cliff* : Is any organizing going on now ?—(*Mr. Naidu*) : There is a Union just started by Mr. Kirk.

K-5793. Are you seeking to build up your organization again ?—Yes ; some of the members who were in the Union originally are forming the Union at Golden Rock and other centres.

K-5794. Are they able to get men to rejoin the Union ?—They are not.

K-5795. Why ?—Because after the strike all the leaders have been convicted and they fear terrorism and victimization. Recently a man was taking an active part in the Union ; he resigned the service after the strike ; then he wanted re-appointment but he was not given it.

K-5796. Is it your view that the Agent of this Railway is opposed to trade unionism ?—I do not think that would be so, but it may be so.

K-5797. Why are the men afraid to join the Union ?—They fear victimization by the Agent.

K-5798. Is victimization going on at the present time ?—Yes. The victimization is that the leaders have been arrested, and the men feel that when the leaders themselves are convicted they as poor labourers are afraid to join the Union.

K-5799. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Are you General Secretary still ?—I was Secretary, but I am not now. No Union is working now.

K-5800. How can the men join a union if there is no union ?—There is a union.

K-5801. *Mr. Cliff* : How do you think relations between employers and employees can be improved ?—There should be a separate committee consisting of employees and employers.

K-5802. Are they to sit separately ?—Yes, and they should hear the grievances of the labourers and then send in their recommendations.

K-5803. Who will voice the grievances of the labourers ?—The Union representatives.

K-5804. Are they in the main men working on the Railways ?—Yes. The Union representatives should first meet by themselves and then make recommendations to the officer.

K-5805. You would like a separate meeting of your own to begin with, then you would be prepared to meet the representatives of the administration and argue out your case ?—Yes.

K-5806. *Mr. Joshi* : With regard to the welfare committee, may I take it that you have no objection to meeting officers ?—Separately, but not along with the members. If the welfare committee consist of elected members they could hold meetings, decide all the questions under discussion and then put their point of view to the officer.

*Mr. Cliff* : They desire, first of all, to meet with a view to arrive at a concerted policy.

K-5807. *Mr. Joshi* : You are not opposed to discussing matters with officers ?—No.

K-5808. How many hours do the station staff work ?—Twelve.

K-5809. Can they find time out of those 12 hours to take rest ?—They have no time.

K-5810. Is the work continuous or intermittent ?—After a train has passed through there is some rest.

K-5811. But do the men find time to go away on their own private business ?—No, there is no time ; when a man is on duty he cannot leave the station ; he must be at the station for 12 hours until he is relieved.

K-5812. There are a number of people on the Railway who do not get sick leave ?—Some get sick leave on full pay. Daily-paid men do not get sick leave.

K-5813. If Government starts a sickness insurance scheme to which Government employees and workers will contribute, will the workers welcome such a scheme ?—Yes.

K-5814. Also unemployment insurance and old age pensions ?—Yes.

K-5815. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : Have you any grievance as to selection for promotion ?—Yes I have a list of names of men appointed in 1903 and 1906, who are receiving Rs. 50 a month ; they have been superseded by men who are favourites of the heads of the section.

K-5816. *Sir Alexander Murray* : How do you know they are favourites ?—It is obvious. Some competitive examination should be introduced for promotion from one grade to another.

K-5817. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : You say a Union has just been formed by Mr. Kirk. Are you going to join that Union or are you going to form a separate Union of your own ?—I could not say.

K-5818. Are you in favour of having one Union for the whole Railway ?—Yes.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

Mr. ERNEST KIRK, Mr. A. EKAMBARAM, Mr. P. S. KRISHNASWAMY IYER, Mr. A. SUNDRAMURTHY, and Mr. R. R. BIRMAMUTHANO, representing the South Indian Railway Labour Union, Coimbatore.

K-5819. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What is your experience of Railway matters ?—(*Mr. Kirk*) : I have been connected with the South Indian Railway since 1924 as the General Secretary and President, and I have been Vice-President of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation for two years.

K-5820. *Mr. Cliff* : Are you the gentleman whom the Agent of the South Indian Railway described as a professional labour leader ?—I do not know.

K-5821. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you special qualifications which would lead you to be described as a professional labour leader ?—Only in the sense that I have given a good deal of my time to this question and have gone about helping the men generally whenever they have demanded any assistance.

K-5822. Have you had any experience of railway work ?—No, not actually as a worker on the railway.

K-5823. Who is the Secretary ?—(*Mr. Krishnaswamy Iyer*) : I am ; I was elected at a meeting in November 1929. I have had 1½ years' service on the South Indian Railway. I am now employed as a fitter on Rs. 1-8-0 a day at Golden Rock workshop.

K-5824. Who is the Vice-President ?—(*Mr. Ekambaram*) : I am ; I was appointed at the foundation of the Union in 1918.

K-5825. When did you join the new Union ?—In 1929. I have had 11 years' experience of railway work on the South Indian Railway. I am now a turner in the Golden Rock shop.

K-5826. What is Mr. Sundramurthy ?—(*Mr. Sundramurthy*) : I am a carpenter in the carriage shop at Golden Rock ; I have been a member of the Union since 1921.

K-5827. What is Mr. Birmamuthano ?—(*Mr. Birmamuthano*) : I am a gang Chargeman in the frame shop at Golden Rock ; I have been on the South Indian Railway for 25 years.

K-5828. You call your Union the South Indian Railway Central Labour Union at Coimbatore ?—(*Mr. Kirk*) : It is the South Indian Railway Labour Union. The word " Central " is a clerical error.

K-5829. We have had the South Indian Railway Labour Union before us already ?—We say there is only one Union ; this is the same Union re-organized in 1929.

K-5829a. We had a gentleman representing the same Union half an hour ago ?—It may be the same Union, but as he said, he has been out of office for nearly 12 months ; we have made an effort to re-organize the Union and we have about a thousand members already.

K-5830. Why do you call it Coimbatore ?—That is because I live at Coimbatore, and according to the rules, the address of headquarters is where the President is.

K-5831. Is it the South Indian Railway Labour Union at Golden Rock ?—Golden Rock is one of the branches.

K-5832. You say that this statement has been approved of at meetings of the Central Committee and represents the considered views of a large number of workers. Where did the Central Committee meet ?—We met at Conoor for the broad gauge about five months ago and then we met again at Golden Rock for the metre gauge.

K-5833. Have you registered ?—Not yet ; we are going to apply for registration as soon as we get the Union organized.

K-5834. Have you communicated directly or indirectly with the Agent of the Railway ?—Yes, four months ago we asked for a deputation which has been refused. At that time we had just started reorganizing the Union and we probably had 500 members then. I did not ask for that deputation as representing a Union. I pointed out to the Agent that by receiving a deputation he would not be recognizing the Union. But the Agent declined on the ground that if he received a deputation he would appear to be recognizing the Union. I wrote as an individual. I did not write on Union paper. I know the Agent fairly well and I thought there would be no difficulty. It is a simple matter to receive a deputation of a few workers. The men passed a resolution that I should accompany them. In a personal interview the Agent agreed but backed out afterwards.

K-5835. You say you want to give the children of employees the first opportunity for vacancies. Is it not the practice to give the children of employees preference ?—My information is that it is not ; they generally get their workers from outside. Of course it is a matter of supply and demand.

K-5836. You suggested that the Apprentices Act of 1850 should be amended. Have you really considered this point ?—Not very elaborately, but I have felt that if we can raise the efficiency of the workers through the apprenticeship system we can raise the wages also.

K-5837. This Act is to enable children, especially orphan and poor children brought up by public charity, to learn trades, crafts, and employments by which when they come to full age they may gain a livelihood ?—I said the Act should be amended ; I am not going back to the old Act. Things are changing very rapidly.

K-5838. You say : “ The Union, therefore, suggests that certain definite tests or examinations, which should include that of general promotion to higher service ” ?—That is a mistake. It should read “ which should include that of a test of general intelligence should be introduced.”

K-5839. There are tests in the shop, are there not ?—Yes.

K-5840. Then what is your argument ?—That they should be applied more frequently and promotion should not be left entirely in the hands of individuals.

K-5841. What do you mean when you recommend the establishment of some kind of machinery on the lines of the Whitley Workshop committees in England or those now in operation in the Tata Iron and Steel Works at Jamshedpur ?—My information is that at Jamshedpur they have a

committee consisting of equal numbers of representatives of a union and of the management. If they do not agree it goes to Board A and then to Board B ; it is finally a matter between the President and the General Manager, and if they cannot agree there is a strike.

K-5842. How do you arrive at Rs. 40 as being the cost of living of a man, his wife and three children ?—I got that from various investigations; the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway have made investigations. I do not say this can be achieved all at once; but it is quite obvious that a man cannot live on Rs. 12 month.

K-5843. *Mr. Cliff* : There are a lot of people doing it ?—They exist, they do not live.

K-5844. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You say the Union is strongly in favour of the introduction of a fair wages clause in industry ; how would you arrive at it ?—I was thinking of a fair wages clause in contracts given out by railways, providing a minimum wage so that they should not undercut other workers.

K-5845. I suppose a lot of this contract labour is agricultural labour ? —I realise it is a very complicated question.

K-5846. You say that trade unionism on the South Indian Railway suffers not only on account of the want of sympathy on the part of the officers but also on account of active opposition. Has that been your experience of the Agent and officers ?—It has not been my experience with regard to the Agent ; I have found him sympathetic and reasonable, and some of the officers as well. The trouble is generally with the lower paid officers. The Foremen and others in depots, who are less educated and less sympathetic, are the men who create all the trouble. I think it would be a good thing if the Agent could get better men, more able to manage men as well as to manage technical jobs. Some of the men in these depots it seems to me do not understand human nature at all, and do not understand how to manage men, although they may know their jobs technically. That was the reason why the Agent, when our Union was recognized, made a request that we should deal direct with him for the first year of the recognition instead of with the subordinate officers. We have had many meetings with the Agent and the heads of departments and we were sometimes sitting for three or four hours at a stretch together. We got a number of grievances redressed in that way.

K-5847. Will the appointment of a Personnel Officer help in that direction ?—I do not think it will solve the difficulty ; I think the only solution lies in a strong Union and representatives of that Union meeting the representatives of the employers on an equal footing.

K-5848. *Mr. Cliff* : I think the Union officials feel that they are not sufficiently well-equipped to meet the officers and they require the assistance of a trained trade union officer ?—I sympathize with that point of view ; I feel the Union ought to have a full time paid man, or two or three such men if possible ; those men would be independent and need not be afraid ; they can represent the men.

K-5849. It is stated in a memorandum that you were successful in forming the Central Committee of the Union ?—Yes, this was done in 1924 and onwards.

K-5850. At what date were you superseded in this Union as President ?—At a conference held at Podanur just before the strike. I think it was in 1928. That conference was held without my knowledge and another President was put in. We had not reached a settlement when the conference took place and direct action was resorted to.

K-5851. But I see the Agent had already issued a circular before the strike took place ?—Yes.

K-5852. Was that circular the result of a settlement between the administration and the Union ?—Not altogether, the men generally had agreed and approved of the idea of giving a retirement bonus which we thought, would eliminate a certain number of men, and that was satisfactory so far, but there were other points on which we were not satisfied.

K-5853 Does that mean you were negotiating as a Union with the Railway Agent and before you reached a settlement he issued a circular setting out the terms on which these transfers were to be effected ?—Yes.

K-5854. Were the negotiations as far as they went reported to all the men concerned ?—Yes, I think so. Of course the circulars of the Agent were posted all over the workshop. The extent to which we had succeeded in our demands was printed and circulated by the Union and was pretty well known in mass meetings.

K-5855. If you, representing a union, were in negotiation with an employer as to a change affecting a considerable number of men, if you were putting forward certain demands and had not effected a settlement and in the meantime the Agent issued a circular stating what terms he was prepared to offer, what action did your union take on that ?—You have to remember that our Union was in its initial stages and we had not been long recognized. You must not compare it with the conditions in England. It is rather difficult to go thoroughly into the matter because it is connected with the conspiracy case, communism and other things. We did our best to get interviews and to get terms with the Agent. As the men were not satisfied, they resorted to a strike. We should have gone to the Railway Board before striking.

K-5856. Did the union suggest to the Railway administration that if they could not agree, the matter should be referred to a third party ?—No, we had not gone so far, we had not finished our negotiations.

K-5857. Do you mean that the Agent issued a circular setting out his terms before the negotiations were completed ?—Yes We said we did not agree with this and we wanted further consultation. Matters were hastened by the strike soon after that.

K-5858. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Is it not a fact that the circular was sent out on the 7th April 1928 and the strike did not take place until the 29th June 1928 which is practically three months after the issue of the circular ; so that there was plenty of time for negotiation between the Agent and the workers.—We protested and had meetings and interviews with him. Then the Rogers Committee was appointed. Partly as the result of that and other difficulties on other lines, that Committee came to Golden Rock and made enquiries. The Agent was prepared to suspend

the application of his scheme until the report of that Committee was issued. We were invited to co-operate on that Committee as a union but the men by a majority boycotted the Committee.

K-5859. Were there threats of a strike before the Rogers Committee was appointed ?—Yes.

K-5860. Was the Committee appointed to come here after threats of a strike were made ?—Yes, I think I may say that. When the National Congress was here in Christmas 1927, the suggestion of my men was to strike Congress week ; the Agent made some concessions and that was averted. After that there was a lot of talk about strikes ; I was opposing the strike constantly because I considered we could do better by negotiation. I had a number of men against me, especially at Negapatam where there was this extreme section egged on by other extremists outside the union altogether, and long before the strike took place I had been supplanted by another president.

K-5861. What is your experience with regard to organizing the men at Golden Rock into the Union which you are trying to re-organize ?—(*Mr. Krishnaaswamy Iyer*) : Men are afraid on account of some words of the officers. Older men who have now joined have been reduced in rates because they did not come back at the time when the Agent issued his circular and the men who are newly recruited are not given any leave. Previously the men had 3 days' absence in the month but now that has been abolished ; if a man is absent for one day, he is at once dismissed. Men are now free to join the Union. Some men are brave enough to come forward because the Commission is here and they want to give evidence to the Commission and put forward their grievances. That is why we are giving evidence to the Commission.

K-5862. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : Did you join the strike ?—No.

K-5863. *Mr. Joshi* : What is the restriction with regard to housing ?—(*Mr. Kirk*) : I understand they are only allowed to have their wives and children there ; they are not allowed to have other dependants in the house ; I have not seen the rule.

K-5864. Am I to understand from what you say in your memorandum that you desire to delay the introduction of a scheme for sickness insurance, unemployment benefit or old age pension till the minimum wage is raised to Rs. 40 ?—Certainly not, but I suppose you would not be opposed to raising the minimum wage from Rs. 12 to Rs. 15 to begin with.

K-5865. Under a sickness insurance scheme to which there are contributions by the Government, the employers and the employees, it is probable that the employee who pays in four annas will get back twelve annas ?—Yes, I would take it if I could get it, but when a person has to borrow money to live, four annas means a lot.

K-5866. But if it is a choice between having no scheme at all and paying a small contribution, your workmen will not object to paying ?—No, I think they would accept it.

K-5867. You suggest in your memorandum that the daily-paid staff should be paid the same rates as are paid on the M. and S. M. Railway.—This was put in by the men at Golden Rock ; I am told that on the M. and



S. M. Railway the daily pay goes up to over Rs. 6 per day whereas on the South Indian Railway in the workshops it is about Rs. 3-12-0.

K-5868. What is the difference between Perambur and Golden Rock ?—I am told the maximum runs up to Rs. 5-4-0 in one case and Rs. 3-12-0 in the other.

K-5869. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : For how many years have you been working in the trade union ?—Twelve years. I came as General Secretary, but at that time there were independent branches and my first effort was to organize a central committee and make it into one big union. When the last strike broke out, I felt that I could not fight domestic differences at that time and I co-operated with them.

K-5870. The strike was declared as a result of the retrenchment. Do you think the strike was inevitable, or do you think you could have accepted the suggestions made by the administration ?—I have already said that in my opinion the strike was premature, that we should have carried on negotiations and that we should have done better. I fought against the strike right up to the last moment.

K-5871. Are you opposed to the idea of a strike ?—No, as a last resort I say it is a legitimate weapon.

K-5872. Have you ever joined a strike ?—Yes. I have taken part in several strikes on the South Indian Railway. I was prominent in the strike at Podanur in 1924 ; I was one of the leaders.

K-5873. Did your advisers all join the strike ?—I do not know.

K-5874. Were you a striker ?—(*Mr. Krishnaswamy Iyer*) : No.

K-5875. Then you worked during the strike ?—No, they did not work.

K-5876. There was a lockout and when they opened the shop you entered ?—Yes. (*Mr. Kirk*) : I should like to say there were hundreds and thousands of men who were with me at the time but many men went on strike rather than go against the men. They did not conscientiously agree with the strike ; it was not a whole-hearted strike and you cannot say these men were blacklegs.

K-5877. I did not say that. Did any of your witnesses give evidence against the leaders and 13 others who were accused ?—I do not know anything about that.

*Sir Alexander Murray* : We are not enquiring into that.

K-5878. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : Do you want only one union ?—Yes ; I am perfectly ready to resign to any better man and co-operate with any men as long as the union wishes it.

K-5879. Will you co-operate with such a union as the Anglo-Indian Union ?—I would certainly rather have one union.

K-5880. Then you are against an Anglo-Indian union ?—Yes, I should say we should all join together.

K-5881. *Mr. Gregory* : You say in your memorandum that the Union has duly considered the above memorandum and approved of the same for the consideration of the Whitley Committee. Have you created any machinery by means of which members can express their agreements ?—

(*Mr. Kirk*) : We have a central committee, Secretaries on the broad-gauge and the metre-gauge, Vice-Presidents and the machinery of the union.

K-5882. Have you prepared your revised rules and regulations ?—Yes.

K-5883. Can we have a copy of the revised constitution ?—Yes.

K-5884. Under these rules and regulations, have you any machinery by means of which you can put an important question to the ballot of the members ?—Yes. With regard to strikes, we have a ballot.

K-5885. Are you sure that the members of your Union as a whole would agree to promotions and so on being decided by tests and examinations ?—I have discussed the matter with many of the men and they have generally agreed with me ; I cannot say that every body agrees.

K-5886. Have both your Committees agreed to this ?—Yes. We consider we represent the railway workers.

K-5887. *Mr. Cliff* : You are the only voice of the workers on this Railway at the moment ?—Yes.

K-5888. *Mr. Gregory* : Can you make any suggestion for improving the relations between the subordinate staff and the employees ?—A different type of foreman and subordinate officer should be employed ; that is one suggestion. I would also suggest that where the union comes into existence and is strong, we should have joint committees ; heavy fines and dismissals should not take place until the matter has been before some sort of committee. A man should be given a chance before he is dismissed. Sometimes a man is dismissed on the recommendation of a Foreman ; he says he is innocent, but the recommendation is that he must be dismissed and he has no chance of defending himself in any way.

K-5889. Would you object to having members of the subordinate staff on the staff committees and welfare committees ?—The men generally are opposed to these welfare committees and staff committees, unless the union is represented on an equal footing with the officers and the men have paid trade union leaders to represent them.

K-5890. In other words, if you had a shop committee, would you prefer to have representatives on that committee from the lower strata ?—I would leave it to the union to put up the best men they can.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

**Messrs. R. W. SUARES, DIAS. THOMMAN** of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway. and **Messrs. S. HOCKINS, FREEMAN and FRENCH** of the South Indian Railway, representing the Anglo-Indian Employees of the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway and the South Indian Railway.

K-5891. *Sir Alexander Murray* : What Railway experience have you ?—(*Mr. Suares*) : I have had 26 years' service with the M. and S. M. Railway ; I am Chief Station Master at a station 80 miles from Madras. (*Mr. Dias*) : I belong to the audit department of the M. and S. M. Railway ; I have been there 14 years. (*Mr. Thomman*) : I have had 7 years' service in the workshops of Perambur. (*Mr. Hockins*) : Altogether I have had about 22 years' service in three different departments—locomotive, traffic and engineering. I am now retired. I have been the Secretary of

the amalgamated society of railway servants. (*Mr. Freeman*) : I am a Foreman in the Golden Rock Shops ; I have had 28 years' railway service ; during 14 years of that time I have been with the South Indian Railway ; before that I was in Bombay. (*Mr. French*) : I have been 24 years on the line.

K-5892. Is your association a trade union ?—(*Mr. Hockins*) : No, it is not a trade union.

K-5892a. Are you going to become a trade union ?—No, that has not been suggested. (*Mr. Freeman*) : It has been considered at Golden Rock.

K-5893. Then it has been under consideration whether it may not be desirable to form yourselves into a Union ?—Yes.

K-5894. Do you feel that you can be members of a union which will not be used for political ends ?—(*Mr. Hockins*) : It all depends on the definition of a trade union. (*Mr. Hockins* then read clause (h) of section 2 of Act XVI of 1926, defining a Trade Union.)

K-5895. *Mr. Cliff* : Do you accept that ?—No. I say that this should be so worded as to keep out these political people. From my experience trade unions can be classified into three types. There is the Trade Union of the South Indian Railway which ran the strike there. I should put that under type 1. Then there are what I call political homicidal savages who do not care who they kill or what trains they smash up. This clause should be so framed as to keep them out. There are other unions which have outsiders as their leaders, which should not be allowed. The third type of union is the one run by railway men for railway men.

K-5896. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Do you think trade unionism in India has reached the stage when it can do without outside assistance ?—Yes, I think so.

K-5897. How would you define a political agitator ?—From the man's previous actions.

K-5898. Is Mr. Joshi a political agitator ?—I have not studied that.

K-5899. Is Mr. Cliff a political agitator ?—This is the first time I have seen him. It is a very difficult question, I agree.

K-5900. Have you applied to the Agent of the S. I. Railway or to the Agent of the M. and S. M. Railway for recognition as an Association dealing with labour matters ?—No.

K-5901. How do you collectively exchange views with the Agents regarding any matter ?—By petition.

K-5902. You refer to the prevalence of bribery. Can you give us any evidence that there is bribery ?—If personal evidence will do, I will give you my own personal experience as a Station Master, which I am not ashamed to confess. There is a vacancy. There are half a dozen after the job. Up comes the money on the table. I say " Take it away ; I do not want it ". The reply is " Sir, if you do not take it I will never get the job. " It is simply thrown at you by the applicant, without being asked for.

K-5903. The custom of the country is such that a present is given ?—There must be a donation given to the man who appoints—as a custom, not as a demand.

K-5904. How do you suggest that that can be stopped ?—As long as day follows night it will never stop in India. It is the same with regard to the allotment of houses.

K-5905. Suppose you were to say : " I agree it is the custom of the country to tender bribes, but I am going to change it ; I refuse to take anything from you ; I will give you a house or a post without any bribe ". What would be the result then ?—He would not believe you. He would feel that you had some body else up your sleeve.

K-5906. Would they not get to know that " At least here is one man among many who is prepared to give us a post or a house without taking a bribe " ?—The Indian would not credit it.

K-5907. *Mr. Cliff* : Did you report any of these cases of tendering bribes ?—Certainly not.

K-5908. Why not ?—It was beneficial to me.

K-5909. You accepted the custom of the country ?—Yes.

K-5910. *Sir Alexander Murray* : This is not general, is it ?—(*Mr. Suares*) : This is pertaining to the S. I. Railway.

K-5911. You do not agree with your colleague ?—Certainly not. (*Mr. Freeman*) : There is corruption, but there is one way of stopping it, namely, a selection board. (*Mr. Thomman*) : There is corruption on the M. and S. M. Railway.

K-5912. What is your post ?—Chargeman.

K-5913. When you were first appointed as a chargeman had you to give a bribe to anybody ?—It is no use asking me that. If I had to give a bribe I would not admit it.

K-5914. If we come here and talk to you gentlemen frankly with a view to getting assistance from you in stopping this practice, and one man says candidly he has done such a thing and another man says : " What do you expect me to do but deny it ", what are we to think ?—(*Mr. Suares*) : Let the job be controlled by the officers.

K-5915. *Mr. Cliff* : How are we to stop the custom of the country ?—(*Mr. Dias*) : If there was a selection board, the applicant could go direct to that board, which would communicate direct with the officer, leaving the intermediaries out of it.

K-5916. The chief officer has to accept the recommendation of a Chargeman or Foreman. If I pay a bribe to the Chargeman or Foreman I get a good recommendation. It is that difficulty we want to get over. What suggestion do you make for getting over it ?—The recommendation should go before the board and be examined by the board to see whether it is true or not.

K-5917. You are asking the railway administration which is dealing with hundreds and thousands of men, to promote a man from his first grade of unskilled labour to semi-skilled labour, and so on and so on. Is it a practicable proposal to say that there should be a selection board for all those kinds of gradings ?—It is the only way out of the difficulty that we can see.

K-5918. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Suppose you had a personnel officer in a workshop, a man to whom all applications must be made, and a man on whom will rest the final choice : would that serve the purpose of an appointments board ?—Yes. (*Mr. Thomman*) : It would be rather hard. (*Mr. Suares*) : One gentleman would not suffice. (*Mr. Thomman*) : That personnel officer would not know a man's ability.

K-5919. Neither would a board. Any objection that you take to an individual officer would be equally applicable to a board. I understand that the Agents of both Railways have appointed personnel officers, who are to deal with applications, appeals, discharges and dismissals. Do you not think that that is a step in the right direction, and that that will help to eliminate this bribery ?—(*Mr. Freeman*) : Will this officer help the board, or will he deal with cases himself ?

K-5920. What difference does it make ?—If there is a board it will be composed of representatives of so many departments and shops, and this officer will be assisted by those various representatives. Then a man's claims and abilities will be thoroughly examined, and the officer will decide the case ? There is no objection to having an officer with a board.

K-5921. You would have no trust in any one particular person ?—No.

K-5922. *Mr. Cliff* : You instance two replies from the Agent to an appeal, and you set out the two formal acknowledgments. Are those exceptional cases, or are they general ?—(*Mr. Hockins*) : They are general. There are complaints all over the Railway. In one case the man was accused of being under the influence of liquor. When a man is accused of that a doctor and two impartial witnesses are supposed to be sent for to certify that he is under the influence of drink. That was not done in this case. Another rule is that a man shall be taken away from his duty at once. In this case the man was notified personally 42 hours after the occurrence that he was under suspension. The whole procedure from beginning to end is wrong. When the Agent is asked to say on what grounds a man is dismissed he gives no reply. Is that justice ?

K-5923. You say that in all enquiries resulting from these appeals the employees concerned should be given every facility to furnish evidence in support of their case and be permitted freely to argue the same. Is it your contention that that is now not possible ?—It is possible but it is not done. The letter goes to the Agent and he is supposed to peruse it. I sent a letter to the Agent quoting certain rules and saying "Will you please answer the questions in my letter". He took no notice of it.

K-5924. On both Railways has this question been the subject of petition ?—(*Mr. Suares*) : Yes.

K-5925. Have you petitioned the Railways to give you facilities for putting forward evidence and arguing them ?—(*Mr. Dias*) : We have not asked the Agents, because we have not got any one to put forward our case.

K-5926. How are you going to make collective representations without some body to put forward your case ?—That is why we asked for conciliation boards. At present we feel the difficulty of it. The rule says that we can appeal to the heads of departments, but it is very hard for our appeals to reach the head of the Department owing to red tape.

K-5927. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You have a circular, dated 21st May 1929 on the M. and S. M. Railway which provides for appeals to the Agent ; do you not take full advantage of that ?—(*Mr. Suares*) : If I had occasion to do so, I would. (*Mr. Dias*) : I am speaking for the general body. We do not take advantage of it for the simple reason that our immediate superior would be against us hereafter, even if we got the benefit of the appeal.

K-5928. *Mr. Cliff* : Are you afraid of your immediate superior ?—Yes, we are afraid of victimization.

K-5929. What do you say with regard to fines ?—If a man makes mistakes, he is fined and besides being fined, he is reduced in grade.

K-5930. You are being fined and reduced at the same time ?—Yes. (*Mr. Suares*) : As far as my department is concerned, if a man is reduced he is not fined.

K-5931. In addition to being fined, are other men allowed to supersede him when a man is fined ?—(*Mr. Thomman*) : A black mark is entered against him in a register.

K-5932. Do you mean that if a man is fined it counts against him with regard to promotions ?—(*Mr. Dias*) : Yes. In many cases it does.

K-5933. What is the difference in rates of wages in the Golden Rock Shop and the Shop at Perambur ?—(*Mr. Freeman*) : The rate for the first grade men at Perambur is Rs. 5-4-0 while at the Golden Rock Shop it is Rs. 2-4-0.

K-5934. Why is there such a wide disparity between the two rates ?—I do not know.

K-5935. Has this been the subject of a representation to the Agent ?—I think it has been very often put up by the union.

K-5936. Can you send us fuller information on the subject ?—Yes.

K-5937. Are daily-rated men paid when they are sick ?—(*Mr. Hockins*) : No.

K-5938. You are definitely asking for a joint standing machinery between railway workmen and the railway administration ?—(*Mr. Dias*) : Yes.

K-5939. *Mr. Joshi* : You seem to be opposed to politicians dealing with labour matters.—(*Mr. Hockins*) : That refers to extremists.

K-5940. If you do not like politicians, why did you accept Colonel Gidney as one of your representatives on this Commission ?—We are a non-political organization ; Colonel Gidney as a member of the Assembly is a politician, but his political activities have nothing to do with our association.

K-5941. So that you do not object to politicians being connected with unions.—No.

K-5942. How can you prevent extremists coming into the unions ?—I do not know.

K-5943. Do you propose that there should be a provision in the Act that no extremist politician should be connected with the union ?—There could be a definition.

K-5944. You seem to suggest that you as a minority community have some grievances in that you do not get your full share.—No, I have not complained of that ; I have made no grievance regarding the community ; all I have said is that in connection with the Indianization scheme the community should be given time to adapt itself to the ways and means in which they want us to live.

K-5945. You do not want any more than your share ?—No.

K-5946. *Colonel Russell* : It appears from the M. and S. M. Railway memorandum that you have a new hospital at Perambur.—(*Mr. Dias*) : Yes.

K-5980. You are given all facilities.—Certainly.

K-5981. Do you not think the administration are trying to break the unions by starting such staff committees and pretending to redress grievances ?—I do not think so.

K-5982. Do you think the M. and S. M. Railway Employees Union is run on the right lines ?—Yes.

K-5983. Are you prepared to join that union ?—Personally, I am not.

K-5984. Will you advise Anglo-Indians to join the trade union ?—I would not say anything for or against it.

K-5985. *Mr. Gregory* : Do you find it difficult to work on the staff committee, because there is an officer present ?—Personally I am not afraid of any man.

K-5986. You have not found it difficult.—No.

K-5987. To begin with, you have a meeting before an officer is present.—Yes, we have a preliminary meeting and we talk very freely among ourselves and put up resolutions. As far as my district—the Madras district—is concerned, we have not found it difficult to put up resolutions.

K-5988. There are three of you representing the Anglo-Indians on this Railway. Were you selected to go as representatives of the M. and S. M. Railway employees ?—The association asked us to go ; we had a meeting at which the President and the travelling Secretary were present.

K-5989. Did all the members of the Anglo-Indian association attend ?—A fair number.

K-5990. They elected you at a meeting.—Yes.

K-5991. You suggest that a roll of candidates should be kept ; are you aware that a roll is already being kept on the M. and S. M. Railway ?—I know a roll exists, but I do not know who keeps it.—(*Mr. Dias*) : The system is all right but whether it is carried out or not is another matter.

K-5992. You have said that there is not a single Anglo-Indian signal inspector on the railway owing to the fact that Anglo-Indians are shut out from these appointments, but is it not a fact that there are five men of the Anglo-Indian community who are signal inspectors ?—They are not signal inspectors ; they are designated assistant signal inspectors and they are doing the work of the signal inspectors without the pay.

K-5993. You complain of a Ticket Collector being put on a salary of Rs. 30 per mensem. May I refer you to your own memorandum with regard to the M. and S. M. Railway. Are they not recruited to a grade and placed in the middle of that grade ?—(*Mr. Dias*) : We say the pay on which they start is not sufficient for an Anglo-Indian to live on.

K-5994. *Mr. Sreenivasalu* : 39 Anglo-Indians have submitted a complaint that this report was done without their knowledge and approval.—(*Mr. Dias*) : Yes ; when our memorandum went out. I was told that the head of the ticket department sent out his chief Inspector and got the ticket inspectors and Ticket Collectors to give him a statement to show they had nothing to do with the memorandum. Our memorandum is based on the opinions of the members of the Anglo-Indian Association ; the men who signed this statement might not be members of our association.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

## (RAILWAYS)

## One hundred and fourth Meeting

BANGALORE.

Tuesday, 18th March, 1930.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon'ble V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI, P.C. (*Presiding*).Sir ALEXANDER MURRAY, Kt.,  
C.B.E.

Mr. A. G. CLOW, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Mr. KABIR-UD-DIN AHMED, M.L.A.

Mr. JOHN CLIFF.

Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

Lt.-Col. A. J. H. RUSSELL, C.B.E.,  
I.M.S., (*Medical Assessor*).Mr. S. LALL, I.C.S., (*Joint Secretary*).

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**Mr. S. GURUSWAMI**, Assistant Secretary of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, Berhampore.

K-5995. *Mr. Sastri* : What are you by profession ?—I am a whole-time worker for the All-India Railwaymen's Federation, and I am personal assistant to Mr. Giri.

K-5996. Do you receive any remuneration for your work ?—I receive an honorarium.

K-5997. What is the constitution of your Federation ? How many Associations of Railway workmen do you include ?—Twelve Railway Unions are affiliated to the Federation at present.

K-5998. How many men employed on the Railways come within the scope of your Federation ?—The figure for the year ending March 31st 1929 was one lakh twenty-five thousand out of a possible total of nearly seven lakhs.

K-5999. How long have you been in existence as a Federation ?—The Federation has been functioning properly since 1924.

K-6000. I see you hold annual sittings at which you pass certain resolutions of a general character regarding your disabilities, grievances and wants ?—Yes.

K-6001. To whom do you send those resolutions ?—To the Government of India, to the Railway Board and to the railway administrations.

K-6002. What has been the fate of those resolutions ?—Beyond a formal acknowledgment no tangible action has been taken by the administrations.

K-6003. Have you tried to meet the authorities in persons ?—Yes, and we were successful only last year. On the 4th May Sir George Rainy was pleased to receive a deputation of the Federation, and recently the principle has been considered of consultation at least twice a year.



K-6004. Have the periods of consultation been fixed ?—Twice a year a deputation of the Federation will meet the Railway Board and discuss outstanding matters.

K-6005. Has any railway administration accorded similar privileges to you ?—The Federation, being an all-India body, no question of meeting with any particular Agent has arisen, except in times of labour disputes, as happened with regard to the N. G. S. Railway and the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, when the General Secretary of the Federation had an interview and tried his best to bring about an amicable settlement.

K-6006. When strikes are called what is your authority as a Federation ?—If an affiliated union declares a strike, and if the Federation feels that the cause is worthy of being taken up, the Federation intercedes and tries to bring about an amicable settlement. For instance, in Hyderabad in 1928 a big strike took place on the N. G. S. Railway. Mr. Giri, as the General Secretary of the Federation, was invited to see Mr. Rosenthall, the acting Agent, and he was successful in bringing about an amicable settlement. Similarly at the time of the Bengal-Nagpur lock-out, a deputation consisting of Mr. Giri, Mr. Chaman Lall and Mr. Joshi waited upon the Railway Board, and were successful in bringing about a settlement. Very recently in the G. I. P. Railway strike the Federation met Sir George Rainy and tried to produce a peaceful atmosphere.

K-6007. Have you power to call a strike ?—The Federation cannot call a strike unless it is endorsed by the affiliated Unions. The decision of the Federation is not binding, and so far no occasion has arisen for the Federation to call a general strike.

K-6008. You say you object to welfare committees and other bodies organized with the countenance of the railway authorities. Is that an attitude adopted by the Federation at any of its annual sittings ?—Yes. We find that the staff committees are more often than not used for the purpose of weakening the trade union organizations.

K-6009. Do you object to welfare work generally under the auspices of the railway authorities ?—We do not object to welfare work on the part of the railway authorities, but we do object to the exclusion of the union representation on these committees. Welfare Committees, as they are now constituted, have no place for union representatives.

K-6010. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have the unions issued orders to their members not to serve on these staff and other committees ?—Yes.

K-6011. It is the policy of the unions that none of their members should serve on welfare committees or on staff committees of any description ?—Yes, as long as the present constitution of those committees remains as it is.

K-6012. *Mr. Sasiri* : I do not quite follow. Have the unions issued instructions to their members that they must not join these committees ?—Yes, because their present constitution goes against the very principles of trade unionism. The opposition of the unions to these committees lies in the fact that these committees are not intended for the purpose stated, but as rivals to trade unions, and we feel that until the constitution of these committees is changed so that trade unions may co-operate with them, our members should have nothing to do with them.

K-6013. Supposing there is a member of a welfare committee who at the same time is a member of a union ?—There is no penalty imposed. It so happens that there are such.

K-6014. But so far as the union itself is concerned, as an organization it does not want its members to be mixed up with these welfare committees ?—Yes, as long as the unions are excluded from these committees.

K-6015. What you desire is that the railway administrations should say “In organising these welfare committees, the Railway Unions as such will be entitled to elect so many members”. You want such a provision made in the constitution of these welfare committees ?—Yes.

K-6016. If that is not the case you feel that you are excluded as unions ?—Yes. In addition, the unions’ right to represent various grievances was withdrawn or ignored and given over to these committees. That is another reason for our opposition.

K-6017. When you say you are in opposition to these welfare committees, do you mean that your objection is based on the fact that as unions you are excluded, or do you object to the beneficent character of the work done by these welfare committees ?—No. On the other hand, we feel that welfare committees can do a good deal for the workers, but the very nature of their constitution prevents any tangible good being done for the workers. If the unions were allowed to co-operate with these committees, they would be very beneficent and useful to the work-people.

K-6018. In their attitude towards the constitution of the welfare committees are the Railway Board and the railway administrations of one mind, or are they of different minds ?—The policy of the Railway Board is not known, but so far as we can see from the way in which various welfare committees function on various railways, there is no uniform policy guiding these committees except perhaps to stifle the trade unions.

K-6019. The policy is being evolved, and you are not without hope that this policy will be sound in the end, after a process of trial and error ?—So far it has been discouraging.

K-6020. You say in your memorandum that you would be glad if complete prohibition were adopted as regards drink among your workmen. Is that a pious wish, or do you state that as a result of certain deliberations. Is there any resolution of the Federation recorded to that purpose ?—There is no express resolution, but the policy of all the unions has been to discourage drink, and even to prohibit it. The affiliated unions have time after time passed resolutions asking for prohibition.

K-6021. *Mr. Cliff* : Would it be possible for you to send in those resolutions, together with the dates ?—I will write to the affiliated unions to send you extracts.

K-6022. *Sir Alexander Murray* : You said that there are now 12 unions affiliated to your Federation. According to the memorandum you had at one time 14 unions affiliated ?—One union has collapsed and another fell into arrears.

K-6023. Which are the 12 unions ?—The B., B. & C. I. Railway Employees Union ; the G. I. P. Staff Union ; the G. I. P. Railwaymen’s Union ; the N. W. R. Union ; the M. S. M. Employees Union ; the E. B. R. Employees Association ; the E. I. R. Labour Union, Patna, ; the S. I. R.

Labour Union, Golden Rock ; the N. G. S. Railway Union, the Mysore State Railway Union ; E. I. R. Union with headquarters at Moradabad and B. N. Railway Indian Labour Union. Three more unions have applied for affiliation.

K-6024. Is the constitution of your Federation as set out in the document sent to the Commission still in force ?—Yes.

K-6025. You have answered some questions regarding strikes. It is indicated in your document that no affiliated union shall be entitled to any support from the Federation during any strike for which the approval of the Federation has not been obtained previously. Does that mean that in the case of strikes the Railway union obtains the previous sanction of the Federation before it goes on strike ?—Not necessarily. The document says “ It is not entitled to support from the Federation ”. That does not mean that the Federation will not support it if it feels there are special circumstances.

K-6026. You refer to certain strikes. In those cases was the Federation consulted before the strikes were declared ?—Not in all.

K-6927. But you supported those strikes ?—Yes. Although a union is not entitled to support technically, if the Federation feels that in any dispute it can interfere with the object of bettering the relations between employers and the employed and of bringing about an amicable settlement, it does so.

K-6028. Are you registered ?—No.

K-6029. Why not ?—Since there has been no recognition of the Federation by the Railway Board up till now, we did not see the necessity of registering the Federation, but now that the Federation is going to be a consultative body with the Railway Board, the matter of registration will have to be seriously considered with the affiliated unions.

K-6030. You know that registration gives certain protection to trade unions ?—Yes.

K-6031. What is the position of the Federation if it approves of a strike on a railway, and then that railway proceeds against the Federation if it takes any active interest in the strike ?—It is the same as the position of an unregistered union.

K-6032. That is to say, under certain circumstances your funds could be attached in the event of your doing things which you ought not to do under the law ?—Fortunately the Federation has not got much in the way of funds.

K-6033. You give the constitution of the executive committee, and you say that it consists of not more than eleven members, including the *ex-officio* President, the Vice-presidents, the Treasurer and the General Secretary. How many Vice-presidents are there ?—Three.

K-6034. What is the name of the President ?—Mr. I. B. Sen.

K-6035. Who are the Vice-presidents ?—Mr. S. C. Joshi, Mr. M. Fathualla Khan and Mr. R. S. Ruikar.

K-6036. You have a General Council which may delegate, as it has done, their duties to an executive committee. The executive committee consists of eleven members, which you say includes the President, the Vice-presidents, the Treasurer and the General Secretary, none of whom are

working with the railways. That leaves room for only two members who are working on railways as employees. Do you think it is a good thing that an important body like your Federation should delegate its powers to an executive committee, nine members of whom have no active knowledge of railway working?—It does not necessarily follow that because they are not employees on the railways that they have no knowledge of railway working. It depends upon the confidence which they command among the workers, and the knowledge they bring to bear upon their questions.

K-6037. *Mr. Cliff* : Has the General Council specifically delegated any of its powers?—So far no powers have been delegated to the executive committee.

K-6038. The General Council consists of a great many railway representatives of unions?—Yes.

K-6039. Is it clear that your General Council has not delegated any of their powers to an executive committee?—So far no occasion has arisen for them to do so.

K-6040. In point of fact, in actual working and practice, has there ever been an executive committee?—No, and the question of revising the constitution is being considered by a sub-committee at the present time.

K-6041. Is that following upon a decision at your last conference at Nagpur?—Yes. The sub-committee was appointed to revise the whole constitution, and the recommendations of that sub-committee will be placed before the General Council and the annual convention.

K-6042. Does your annual convention take place next year?—This year, in November.

K-6043. Will you send in the revised constitution after it has been passed in November?—Certainly.

K-6044. *Sir Alexander Murray* : The constitution of the Railwaymen's Federation provides that on the General Council there shall be "5 representatives for a union having a number of members above 5,000". You have 12 unions, and I suppose most of them have round about 5,000 members or more, because you say there are 1,25,000 members?—Yes.

K-6045. That means that your General Council at the present moment consists of 60 members?—Yes.

K-6046. How many of these 60 members ever come together for any meeting?—Meetings of the General Council are not held more than once or twice in a year, and on most occasions they are well attended.

K-6047. The power must be delegated to some body to carry out the detail work?—The Secretary does the secretarial work, giving effect to the resolutions passed; if a very important matter arises he will call a meeting of the General Council and get a declaration of policy from the Council.

K-6048. Are you a member of the Trade Union Congress?—This Federation is not affiliated to the Trade Union Congress.

K-6049. You were present at the Nagpur meeting?—Yes.

K-6050. In what capacity were you present?—As Assistant Secretary of the Bengal Nagpur Railway Union.

K-6051. *Mr. Clow* : Referring to what you say in your memorandum regarding credit banks, will the railways or the employees find the money, for these banks ?—The employees will provide the money, but the railways will help to the extent of realising the dues through salary bills and giving facilities.

K-6052. Who is going to provide the initial capital for the bank ?—If the railways provide it, it will be welcome.

K-6053. Do you mean that the railways are to provide the money but are to have no control at all over the management of the banks ?—There will be guarantee of the return of the money when a large body of employees will stand surety.

K-6054. Do you think the credit banks have done anything to reduce indebtedness so far ?—They have done good work, but much better work could have been done had they been solely managed by the people.

K-6055. Is it not your experience that a man takes credit from the credit bank and gets into debt to the money-lender as well ?—Possibly so, because it is not possible to get as much credit as is necessary ; cases arise in which people also resort to money-lenders in addition to obtaining credit from the banks.

K-6056. How would you prevent that ?—I should like an Act to be passed preventing taking loans from any other body.

K-6057. Do you mean you would prevent it by making it irrecoverable ?—Yes ; the discouragement must come to the money-lender ; you should prevent the money-lender by making it impossible for him to lend money.

K-6058. In other words, you are in favour of restricting the credit open to railway employees ?—Not exactly restricting but regulating ; we want all the needs of a railway man to be supplied by the credit bank and not through any other outside sources.

K-6059. In your memorandum you say : “ There is a clear necessity for introduction of weekly payment legislation ”. Do you mean that all railway employees should be paid weekly ?—If possible, all should be paid weekly, but at any rate those whose wages are less than Rs. 250 should be paid weekly.

K-6060. Do you think that would be popular with the men ?—The present state of things is not popular ; the wages are very low.

K-6061. But if the railways agreed to your proposal to pay weekly, all persons receiving Rs. 250 or less, do you think the persons concerned would like it ?—Certainly. When you introduced beneficial measures there is sometimes opposition first, but there would certainly not be opposition when the Unions have educated the people as to the benefits that will accrue.

K-6062. You say the general tendency of the workers is to spend lavishly ?—That is not my statement ; that is the statement of the Bombay Labour Gazette.

K-6063. If men were paid four times a month instead of once a month, do you not think there would be a tendency to spend lavishly on four pay days instead of one ?—They spend lavishly at present because their

desires have been repressed, but if they were paid regularly and adequately there would not be lavish expenditure.

K-6064. A great many men live more or less on credit from the *bania*, do they not ?—Certain people on account of low wages depend upon the *bania*.

K-6065. If you had weekly wages what would happen to such men ?—The immediate effect would be that they would be able to supply their needs by their wages without getting into debt unnecessarily.

K-6066. You say that you have “demanded a system of time-scale of payment which will ensure every employee whose service has been satisfactory, a progressive increase in remuneration, proportionate to increased family burdens”. Do you mean that when a man has a child born to him his pay should be increased ?—Certainly. We are in favour of family allowances.

K-6067. If one man makes up his mind to live economically, not to marry and to have no children, while another man says he will have 6 children, why should the State pay more to the second man than to the first ?—The fact that such a payment is made in very advanced countries shows that it is not an unreasonable thing. In France there is a system of family allowances, and I think also in Czechoslovakia.

K-6068. Is not that because in France they are anxious to increase the population, and would not a measure of this kind have the effect of increasing the number of births ?—Certainly not.

K-6069. You do not think the number of births is in any way affected by economic considerations at present ?—There is a serious difference of opinion on that.

K-6070. I notice you passed a resolution opposing the Trade Disputes Bill ?—In the Jharia session.

K-6071. To what do you object in that measure ?—Firstly, because employees in public utility services have been asked to forego the right which they formerly enjoyed of striking without giving long notice.

K-6072. The notice is 15 days, is it not ?—Yes.

K-6073. Do you consider that unreasonable ?—In a country like India where the employer is all powerful, the giving of even a day's notice in my opinion will to that extent handicap the union. It does not mean that we are opposed to giving notice, but we feel that it is generally a question of tactics.

K-6074. But what about the public ?—The trouble is that the public have no voice in India.

K-6075. But do you not think they ought to have ; do you not think that before you call a strike on all the railways, they should have the right to know some days beforehand ?—They have the right to prevent strikes by all reasonable means.

K-6076. If you are in a position to call lightning strikes, how are they protected ?—We differentiate between lightning strikes which are justifiable and others which are not. We are not in favour of all lightning strikes.

K-6077. Surely you are in favour of conducting disputes as far as possible by negotiation before a strike ?—Exactly.

K-6078. Then is it unreasonable to ask that you should wait 15 days before a strike actually comes into operation ?—Strikes can only be prevented by encouragement being given to constitutional means.

K-6079. *Mr. Cliff* : I understand your Federation is asking for a Railway Wages Board on which the public should be represented ?—Yes.

K-6080. Does the Trade Disputes Act make any provision for the public being represented or for any enquiry taking place prior to a strike ?—Not in all cases.

K-6081. Does the Trade Disputes Act give you any compensatory advantage for having to give 15 days' notice ?—No.

K-6082. *Mr. Clow* : Supposing there were some system of a wages board, would your objection to the 15 days' notice disappear ?—We are not equally opposed to it if it is based on the Canadian Act, which provides proper machinery for negotiating ; but in this country there is no such machinery and it is putting the cart before the horse.

K-6083. Would you be in favour of legislation on the lines of the Canadian Disputes Investigation Act ?—With suitable modifications.

K-6084. I mean on the general principles ; I am not dealing with details ?—Exactly.

K-6085. *Mr. Joshi* : You have said that your Federation is not registered as a trade union ; are the unions which form the Federation registered ?—Except three unions the others are registered.

K-6086. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Nine unions out of 12 are registered ?—Two of them are in the Indian States : the Mysore and N. G. S. Railways. So that in those two cases question of registration does not arise.

K-6087. *Mr. Joshi* : You are in favour of public employment agencies, but you suggest there should be representatives of the workers as well as of the employers on those agencies ?—Exactly.

K-6988. In your memorandum you suggest penalizing recruitment other than through the employment agencies. How would you do that ?—As in the case of disobeying the provisions of the Factories Act.

K-6089. You are in favour of some scheme of unemployment insurance ?—Yes.

K-6090. Will your members be ready to pay some small contribution towards an unemployment insurance fund ?—At a later stage I have said that the contributions for unemployment, sickness and other matters should not be separated but should be comprised in a payment which should not exceed a certain percentage of the wages.

K-6091. You want a complete scheme for all kinds of social insurance ?—Yes.

K-6092. But if Government are not prepared to adopt a comprehensive scheme, will you be opposed to an unemployment insurance scheme ?—Certainly not.

K-6093. And in that case your members will be willing to pay a small contribution ?—Exactly.

K-6094. Why do you feel the necessity for some kind of appeal against the decisions of the medical officers of the railways ?—Because they are the servants of the railway and are subject to indirect pressure.

K-6095. Has racial discrimination disappeared from the railway service ?—Not at all. There are still scales of pay on certain railways based on racial discrimination ; the quarters are allotted on a racial basis and the leave rules are framed on the same basis. Guards' Running Rooms and Institutes are further instances.

K-6096. Are Europeans and Anglo-Indians recruited on different scales of pay to those given to Indians ?—Yes.

K-6097. Is it your experience that the railways employ contractors for certain kinds of work which they could do themselves ?—Yes.

K-6098. Why do they do that ?—Sometimes because it affords a potential source of blackleg labour and also in order possibly to retrench people indiscriminately.

K-6099. They employ contractors in order to make it easy for them to deal with strikes ?—Yes, and to be independent of local labourers.

K-6100. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Can you give us an instance of that sort of thing ?—If you refer to the memorandum of the Bengal Nagpur Union you will find the policy laid down by the head of that administration of introducing contract labour to do work originally done in the workshops and it says that that is done in order that they may be independent of local labour.

K-6101. *Mr. Joshi* : What is your attitude towards a scheme of sickness insurance ?—The attitude of the railwaymen may be very clearly defined in this way that any proposed scheme of insurance should not deprive employees of any privileges which they may now enjoy.

K-6102. Have you any objection to having a sickness insurance scheme for those people who get no benefit of any kind when they are sick at present ?—We have no objection.

K-6103. In that case you make no condition ?—No condition.

K-6104. Will they be willing to make some small contribution towards a sickness insurance scheme ?—Yes, provided it is not too much.

K-6105. Is any differentiation made between Europeans and Anglo-Indians and Indians as to qualifications for employment in railway service ?—Yes ; on the Eastern Bengal Railway the Agent circularised a letter assuring the Anglo-Indian staff that in spite of the policy of Indianization the Anglo-Indians would be given preference and would be engaged on lower qualifications than Indians.

K-6106. *Sir Alexander Murray* : Have you a copy of that letter ?—You will find it in the memorandum of the Eastern Bengal Railway Employees' Association.

K-6107. *Mr. Joshi* : You are in favour of a central wages board and district wages boards as laid down in the English Railways Act ?—Yes.

K-6108. You do not think that will stand in the way of the development of unions ?—It depends upon the constitution of the trade board.

K-6109. If it is on English lines there is no objection ?—There is no objection.



K-6110. It really means that you do not object to any machinery for settling disputes between employers and employees if these two conditions are fulfilled : (1) that your Union is recognized as part of that organization and (2) the functions of the unions are not usurped by the new body ?—Exactly.

K-6111. At present you are aware that on certain committees the individual grievances of the men are dealt with while unions are not allowed to deal with individual grievances ?—Yes, the right of the unions to speak on behalf of their members should not be usurped.

K-6112. Have you read the new leave rules ?—Unfortunately we have not yet received them. It was mentioned that they were published in the *Gazette of India*, and we have asked the Railway Board to send us a copy.

K-6113. Is it your experience that the fines fund is disproportionately spent on Europeans and Anglo-Indians rather than on Indians ?—Yes.

K-6114. You would like to have this fines fund managed by a joint committee of the employers and representatives of the Union ?—Exactly ; we have no objection to that.

K-6115. You want the instalments payable to co-operative societies to be deducted from salaries ?—Yes ; that should be done subject to the employee being willing.

K-6116. Are you in favour of a general right being given to the railways on behalf of the co-operative credit society to deduct instalments from wages without the direction of the employee ?—No.

K-6117. *Col. Russell* : What evidence have you of the statement that “ recently rigour of medical examinations for the traffic, running staff, etc., has been increased ” ?—The employees are constantly complaining that that is so, but we are not in a position to say technically that it is so.

K-6118. You complain of the compulsory retirement under this head, but I suppose you would admit that the railways have to consider the safety of the public in the first place ?—Yes.

K-6119. If a man's sight is defective, for instance, I suppose he must be removed from the running staff ?—He should be removed to a position in which he would be suitable.

K-6120. But that might result in lowering of grades ?—Not necessarily.

K-6121. You would not accept that ?—No, because we maintain that these ailments are incidental to the occupation.

K-6122. The individual concerned should receive compensation ?—Exactly : and that compensation can be better paid in the shape of undiminished wages.

K-6123. Your suggestion is that he should occupy a less responsible post, but receive the same pay ?—Yes.

K-6124. Do you think that would be fair to those who are holding similar posts ?—Certainly.

K-6125. You say : “ the employees have no right of reference to independent and competent medical opinion ”. Are you quite sure of that ?—Yes ; many people have lost their jobs on account of that.

K-6126. The Chief Medical Officer on the M. and S. M. Railway said that such cases were referred for instance to an ophthalmic specialist in Madras ?—That may be so in certain individual cases, but generally the employees have no right of reference.

K-6127. You feel that for each railway a referee should be appointed ?—Not a referee but a board, to which cases of doubt could be referred ; that board should consist of people in whom the employers and employees have confidence as being impartial.

K-6128. Is it the view of the Federation that the railway should provide houses for all their employees ?—Yes. The nature of railway work is such that this privilege is absolutely necessary.

K-6129. With regard to housing quarters, you say that “ the racial discrimination in regard to types of quarters allotted to employees can be glaringly perceived by a visit to some Railway colonies, like Khargpur, Lillooah, etc.” We were at Khargpur ?—Possibly you were not shown the contrast between the European settlement and the Indian settlement.

K-6130. I suppose you admit that there is a different standard of living ?—The standard of living is based on discriminating scales of pay.

K-6131. You say : “ most of the quarters provide no arrangements for adequate lighting, conservancy and water supply and apparently are not designed from a health point of view ”. Whose opinion is that ?—It is the opinion of the suffering employees. Quarters in the railway colonies are not satisfactory.

K-6132. Have you ever been to the Golden Rock colony ?—Yes.

K-6133. Do you still maintain that none of the quarters are satisfactory ?—I do not maintain that they are all unsatisfactory, but some of them are unsatisfactory. The quarters allotted to the daily-paid staff are unsatisfactory. If there are exceptions then the exceptions prove the rule.

K-6134. You say that “ quarters should be built on the methods suggested by a joint committee of employers, workers’ organizations and sanitary experts ”. Do you think that is a practicable proposition ?—Certainly. At Khargpur there has been what is known as the Cunningham Committee on which the railway officers and union officials have been functioning in order to recommend the best type for new houses.

K-6135. Do you know what happened there ?—It has not functioned properly.

K-6136. Why not ?—Because the Company has not been willing to finance the recommendations.

K-6137. The evidence we had was that the workers’ representatives on that committee would not agree to any type plan and could not agree to put forward any type themselves ?—That is not exactly true. They did not agree to the Union’s suggestion regarding the improvement of quarters and quarters were built very inconveniently for the staff.

K-6138. Under the heading of “ Health ” you say “ medical facilities as exist are very inadequate ”. Is that a general statement too ?—Yes.

K-6139. In every place ?—Even at Khargpur, where there were four dispensaries including the Government dispensary.

K-6140. And at Golden Rock ?—The facilities there also are inadequate. There are no *zenana* hospitals or Lady Doctors for women Folk in any of the Railway Colonies.

K-6141. *Mr. Clow* : Are any women employed on the railways ?—Many thousands.

K-6142. In what capacity ?—As workers in the workshops, etc.

K-6143. *Col. Russell* : You have Government hospitals quite near ?—Yes, but that is only at Khargpur.

K-6144. And at Trichinopoly and Madras ?—In Trichinopoly you have to go 4 miles ; in Madras they can deal with cases without railway hospitals. I am not referring to the colonies only but to the outstations where no facilities exist at all and one doctor has to look after nearly 30 stations.

K-6145. You say : “ special investigation by independent medical experts is necessary ” as to industrial diseases. Is there such a thing as industrial disease on railways ?—We feel there are, but they have not been properly investigated.

K-6146. If a medical officer has been 20 to 25 years on a railway, do you not think he is an expert in railway work ?—He might be.

K-6147. And therefore he is possibly aware of the fact that there may or may not be industrial diseases among the men ?—He may be aware of it, but it does not follow that he will recommend relief for the good of the workers. He may not recommend treatment which may result in financial cost to the employers. Cases may occur in which the employees are not properly treated by the railway doctors because the railway doctors are servants of the railway.

K-6148. *Mr. Cliff* : With regard to occupational diseases, when a man is being medically examined as an applicant for railway service, is he examined for varicose veins ; have you any knowledge of any cases of varicose veins occurring amongst your members on the railways ?—I cannot say.

K-6149. Is your Federation taking the opportunity which this Commission has provided of putting forward a large number of demands of railwaymen ?—No, certainly not ; whatever we are demanding has been put forward in resolutions which have been passed at the annual conventions, published and sent to the Government.

K-6150. Is it the position of your Federation that they are prepared to negotiate with the Railway Board and the Railway Agents in respect of these matters ?—Certainly ; we have no objection to that. Our difficulty is that we do not get an answer. We are prepared to accept a reasonable compromise.

K-6150a. Does your Federation believe in striking and stopping the public services ?—We do not always.

K-6151. Is it the policy of your Federation that every attempt should be made to prevent a stoppage of railway services ?—Certainly.

K-6152. What suggestions do you make for dealing with matters arising out of employment ?—We want joint standing committees in which union representatives will deal with every day matters on the basis of Whitley Committees.

K-6153. Does that mean that your Federation and its constituent Unions are prepared to meet the different railway administrations ?—We are very anxious to meet them.

K-6154. And to put propositions before them as to the setting up of regular machinery whereby matters arising out of employment can be dealt with ?—Yes.

K-6155. Is it your experience that men who are not members of your Union have not put forward any demands ?—Yes, they are mostly illiterate. As a matter of fact if the unions were properly encouraged they would have a membership of 100 per cent. Most of those who are not members do in fact follow the policy of the unions.

K-6156. Are you prepared to accept a Railway Wages Board on the lines of the English Railway Board ?—Provided that it includes real representatives of the public and is not nominated by Government.

K-6157. Is there any real difficulty in securing representatives of the public in India ?—There is considerable difficulty. There is no machinery by which the opinion of the public can be obtained and the legislatures do not fully represent the public.

K-6158. May I take it that it is a matter between your Federation and the Railway Board to endeavour to agree with regard to the selection of an independent Chairman ?—Certainly.

K-6159. Assuming that machinery were established, are you prepared to accept its decisions ?—Certainly.

K-6160. Does that mean you are in favour of compulsory arbitration ?—Yes, compulsory arbitration by a properly constituted body. But the difficulty is to get a properly constituted body.

K-6161. Do you think it is possible to get a body in which you would have confidence ?—Yes.

K-6162. *Mr. Joshi* : Has the Federation passed resolutions in favour of compulsory arbitration ?—No.

K-6163. *Mr. Cliff* : Then how can you say they are in favour of compulsory arbitration ?—It is my own personal opinion ; it cannot be taken as being the opinion of the Federation.

K-6164. Is the Chinese labour to which you refer a serious problem ?—Yes ; at the time of the Lillooah East Indian Railway workshop strike Chinese labour was brought in.

K-6165. What number were employed ?—I cannot give you the definite number, but it was considerable. Some six months ago Chinese representatives came to Khargpur and wanted the union to help them in getting employment for a large number of Chinese in Khargpur in various categories as fitters and skilled staff.

K-6166. With reference to the statement made in your memorandum in regard to accidents, has a demand been made to the different railway administrations that a representative of the trade union should be present when an enquiry is being held into an accident ?—The Bengal Nagpur Railway Labour Union asked the administration to allow a Union representative to be present but this was refused.

K-6167. Has any representation been made to the Railway Board in that respect ?—It is a Company-managed Railway and they say that no appeal lies to the Railway Board.

K-6168. But has this demand been put before the Railway Board with regard to the State-managed railways ?—Not yet, but it is a matter of representation by the unions to the administrations.

K-6169. You refer in your memorandum to Mr. Gokhale's amendment with regard to the education of half-timers, and you say " it is necessary that a similar amendment including adult illiterate workers should be incorporated in the present labour legislation ". What is meant by that ?—There is a large number of illiterate adult employees in the workshops and their efficiency is to that extent diminished. We want a provision in the Factories Act making it compulsory for the employer to educate every illiterate employee, whether an adult or a child. We want night schools to be financed by the railways.

K-6170. *Mr. Ahmed* : I understand you are in favour of compulsory education at the cost of the railways ?—Yes.

K-6171. What is the living wage of a worker, his wife and two children ?—It does not fall short of Rs. 35 for bare food.

K-6172. What will be the additional cost of clothing ?—It cannot be less than Rs. 7 to Rs. 10 per month.

K-6173. What is the cost of house rent ?—Rs. 84 to Rs. 100 per annum is the minimum ; I wish to refer you to the Bombay Government's Labour Office enquiries and also Burma Government's enquiry.

K-6174. *Col. Russell* : Would the same figures apply to Madras ?—Certainly not. So far as rentals are concerned, but other expenses are approximately the same or not widely different.

K-6175. *Mr. Ahmed* : What would be the cost of cooking utensils ?—Re. 1 per month on the average.

K-6176. What is the cost of the barber ?—As. 8.

K-6177. What is the cost of soap ?—As. 8.

K-6178. Are these people indebted ?—Very much indebted.

K-6179. You have said that money-lenders should be prevented from lending money to the workers ; do you propose that legal immunity from proceedings should be given to workmen as is given to Indian Princes ?—I think that workers earning less than a certain minimum wage should be immune from civil proceedings in respect of such debts.

K-6180. Your idea is that they should borrow from the co-operative credit societies ?—Yes.

K-6181. You have said that you want something on the lines of the English Whitley Committees ?—Yes ; may I refer you to Mr. Gilchrist's book " Conciliation and Arbitration " pages 48, 49 and 50 regarding English Government Committee's recommendation to constitute Whitley Committees consisting of solely trade union representatives and the acceptance of this recommendation by the Government for its works.

(The witness withdrew.)

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K-622*a*. Then it is not correct to say that you have provided opportunities for advancement?—There are other ways of advancement besides changing your class. It is a help for advancement, of course. It helps a man to qualify for higher promotion in the same class.

K-663. Taking the staff in general, a man who is a Ticket Collector has very little chance to qualify himself to be a Station Master. — You do not give him a chance to qualify?—Generally a Ticket Collector qualifies as a Guard and not as a Station Master. There is a limit to the number of courses we can introduce. We are only too anxious to make the scheme as wide as possible, but there are limits.

K-663*a*. Do you train the booking clerks to test coins?—That is not part of the syllabus, but it might be introduced.

K-663*b*. You are aware that booking clerks have to make up any deficit on bad coins, which amounts to one-tenth of their pay?—We do not accept one-tenth. We should say it is roughly 1/100.

K-663*c*. If you like I will send the Commission figures. You have given various grades of all employees, which gives the idea that there is a wide scope for advancement; but on the contrary the memorandum submitted by the union shows that 85 per cent. are blocked on the lower classes. Would you like to prepare, for the information of the Commission, a statement showing the exact percentage of the staff at various scales of pay when they are blocked?—I have no desire to do that unless the Commission desires it.

*The Chairman* : As we are now dealing with railway matters, I do not think the Local Commissioners are entitled to ask questions on this point.

K-664. *Miss Power* : Has any explanation been given to the rank and file of the railway staff as to the purpose of the Labour Bureau, before it was set up? Was the matter sprung on them as a *fait accompli*?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : We translated all the orders which were issued in connection with it into the local vernaculars, and those orders were posted up. In addition, the staff have taken every opportunity of verbally explaining to individuals and to groups the purpose of the Labour Bureau.

K-665. *Mr. Clow* : We have heard a good deal about the recognition of the unions. Can you explain exactly what is involved in recognition?—(*Col. Watson*) : I suppose recognition means accepting delegations from them.

K-666. Is that all?—As far as I know.

K-667. What is the difficulty in recognising more than one union dealing with the same class of men?—They would put up different recommendations for the same class of people.

K-668. That would be disadvantageous to them, but not to you?—We do not want to make capital from it.

K-669. In what way does it make it difficult for you?—It would be distinctly difficult if we get different recommendations. The granting of a recommendation to one union would be made a grievance by the other union who might be against it.

K-670. It would give you a better opportunity of arriving at what was fair and just if you heard the arguments of both sides ?—I do not think it would be advantageous. We should not get any further if we recognised two unions representing the same class of people.

K-671. "Recognizing" really means nothing else but answering letters and hearing complaints ?—It involves giving passes.

K-672. That is not essential ?—No.

K-673. Is this policy of recognizing only one union on a railway a local policy ?—I cannot say. It is owing to our local situation. The difficulty is that the unions claim to represent the same classes. The situation is not the same as if one union was representing the workshops and the other union the line.

K-674. Are you not virtually saying to the men "unless you can agree to go into one large union, we shall not allow you to make combined representations" ?—(*Mr. Muirhead*) : There is another factor to be taken into consideration, and that is the communal factor. There are certain unions formed who claim to represent the interests of, we will say, the Anglo-Indians and the Domiciled European community, which we will not recognize because it raises the communal question.

K-675. But surely in other services Government has recognized unions of Indian Government servants and European Government servants ?—The question of unions bristles with these difficulties. Amongst other difficulties is that of one particular class of individual being represented, and a union being formed, and they coming forward and saying "will you recognize us".

K-676. But if classes exist surely it is not unnatural that those classes should desire to have separate representation ?—We do not officially recognize, or have, any racial discrimination.

K-677. As regards the payment of wages, I understand that in the workshops you pay normally on about the 10th of the month a part of a man's wage and the remainder of it some 30 days later—the bonus ?—Yes.

K-678. Is it not possible to reduce that period ?—Yes.

K-679. What are the difficulties in the way ?—That information is available with the Government of India and the Railway Board. It is a question over which we do not exercise any real control. It is a finance question.

K-680. Your difficulties arise mainly from accounting ?—Yes.

K-681. With the lines staff the period seems to be extremely long. The difficulty seems to be to some extent in distribution as well as accounting ?—Yes, with the line staff.

K-682. Do you think it is desirable that these periods should be reduced ?—Yes.

K-683. As regards fines, would it be practicable to set a limit to the amount a man could be fined—say, 5 per. cent. of his pay in a month ?—There is a limit. In fact our aim is to do away with fines.